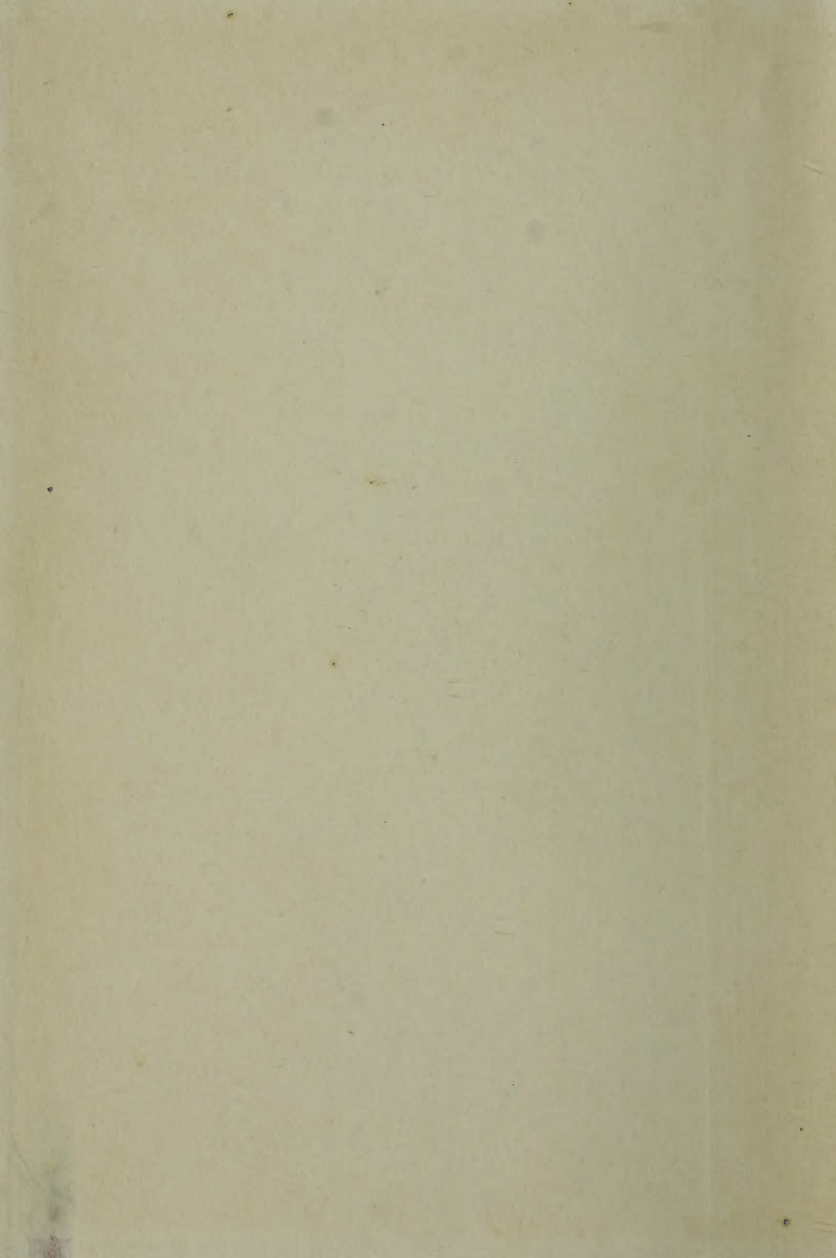


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THE MIDSUMMER
OF ITALIAN ART

★ ★ ★
FRANK P. STEARNS





APOLLO, BY LEONARDO DA VINCI

The Midsummer of Italian Art

BY

FRANK PRESTON STEARNS

The Authors' Club, London

Author of "The Real and Ideal in Literature," "The
Life of Tintoretto," etc.

REVISED EDITION



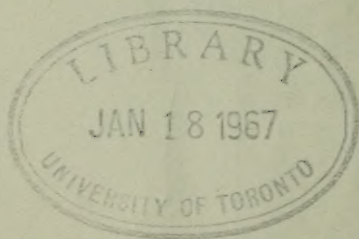
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IN MEMORIAM

LAETITIA TRELAWNEY

Were not the eye itself a sun,
No sun for it would ever shine.
By nothing godlike could the heart be won,
Were not the heart of man divine.

Goethe.

PREFACE TO REVISED EDITION

IN the first edition of *Midsummer* I stated that my object was to provide a comprehensive account of the greatest Italian painters, which might serve both as a book of reference for American travellers in Europe, and to revive the recollections of what they had seen after their return. In revising my book I have considered the request of my friends and critics for a more thorough and complete analysis of the works of Raphael and Michel Angelo, as the two artists in whom the public takes the liveliest interest. I have also amended the account of Leonardo da Vinci so as to introduce a statement of every picture which can be ascribed to him on reasonable grounds. Certain additions have also been made to the account of Correggio, but the similarity of his designs makes a complete list of his paintings of less importance than the others.

In order to make the book as perfect as possible, I have compared my previous statements with those of the most distinguished writers on the subject, and where I became satisfied that I was formerly in error I have made such changes as were necessary, giving credit to the proper authority in a foot-note. This applies, however, chiefly to the account of Raphael, and in a less degree to Leonardo and Correggio. There is no thorough-going criticism of Michel Angelo's works that I can hear of, in any language, and my own statement would seem to be the first attempt in that direction.

I should like to call the reader's attention especially to the likeness of Michel Angelo's *Moses* and his *Slaves* to certain antique statues; to the progressive series of Raphael's early Madonnas; and to the resemblance of the *Reading Magdalen* to Correggio's *Madonna della Scala*.

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THE MIDSUMMER OF
ITALIAN ART

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MEDIÆVAL ITALY

WHO are the modern Italians?

From the earliest dawn of tradition the valley of the Po was occupied by various Gallic tribes, who lived in a communal manner without any very definite or substantial form of government. They made little resistance to the supremacy of the Romans, and were organized into the province of Cisalpine Gaul between the first and second Punic wars. The southern extremity of the peninsula, together with the larger part of Sicily, had been colonized by Greeks, and remains largely Hellenic to the present day. Between the two were the Latin race with their near kindred, the Samnites and the Lucanians; and north of Latium were the Etruscans, one of the most gifted, mysterious, and enigmatic of all the tribes of men. Scientific research and speculative reasoning have equally failed to discover who

they were, and where they came from. Like the Hungarians, they possessed the finest qualities of the Aryan family, but their language has proved a more severe puzzle than the cuneiform inscriptions or Egyptian hieroglyphics. They may possibly have been a colony from the original Iberian race before the Gauls descended upon Spain and changed the manners and language of its inhabitants. Their careful entombment of the dead, and taste for ornamental pottery, suggest to us a finer mental endowment than belonged to the other Italian tribes of their time.

The tradition that the last three kings of Rome were of Etruscan origin may indicate a temporary conquest of that city, and shows plainly enough that there must have been a large Etruscan element in its population. It may have served the same purpose that carbon does when united with iron in the manufacture of steel. Whether the Romans finally conquered the Etruscans or not, the latter became absorbed in the Roman state, losing their own language and, to a certain extent, their individuality. Many of them may still exist in the mountain cities of Tuscany, where change is almost unknown, and generations of men are born and pass away like the rising and setting of the sun. During the dark ages, however, the Romans entirely disappeared, and all connecting links with the ancient world were broken asunder.

The importation of slave labor is known to have had a very injurious effect on the population of Italy. These slaves were chiefly Spaniards, Gauls,

and Asiatic Greeks. They came from all countries bordering on the Mediterranean, but the Gallic and Grecian element preponderated among them. The conflict between free and slave labor, or rather the oppression of the free laborers by the slave system, resulted in the succession of civil wars which finally extinguished Roman liberty. Tiberius Gracchus, returning from the siege of Numantia, was saddened by seeing the fertile fields of Italy cultivated by slaves, while the descendants of free Italian farmers were driven to seek a scanty subsistence on the sides of the mountains. Mommsen says of a later period : "Italy was filled partly with gangs of slaves and partly with awful silence." In this way the country became denuded of its original inhabitants. During the Roman Empire the population of Italy steadily decreased. Every proconsul who went out to take charge of a province and every merchant who established a trading-house in a foreign city carried with him a number of young men, who were not likely to return unless they accumulated sufficient wealth to live in a patrician manner. This accounts for the rapid civilization of Gaul and Britain. England was more civilized in the fourth century than in the tenth ; and in the seventh century Ireland contained the only civilization that still remained in western Europe. When the Goths (or Swedes) invaded Germany, the Romans left Britain in a body, fearing that all chance of return would be cut off for them ; but it is not likely that they proceeded farther than the southern part of France.

What happened while the Goths were in Italy will

never be known, but they remained there long enough to change the structure of the language after the German fashion. Machiavelli said of it: "The fearful events of those times were portrayed on the faces of men; when they not only changed their customs and government but their religion and their language; the thought of either of these being enough to strike terror into the stoutest heart." The Goths were magnificent raw material, and we feel it a shame that the kingdom of Theodoric should not have endured like that of the Franks, and a powerful nation been established in Italy sufficient to resist all foreign aggression; but this would have retarded civilization, and was not written in the book of fate. After their defeat by Narses, only a small band escaped through the Brenner pass, and what became of them afterwards remains a mystery. They came and went, leaving nothing behind them but disintegration.

The slave population of Italy no doubt profited by this, for they had everything to gain from civil disturbances and nothing to lose except their lives—and human life was of small value in the sixth century. The frequency of manumission lessened the rigor of servitude in ancient times, as the serfdom of the middle ages was mitigated by the intercession of the clergy.

The invasion of the Lombards had a more substantial effect and really laid the foundation of modern Italy. Instead of spreading themselves over the whole country, which proved to be the ruin of the Goths, they took possession of the valley of

the Po, appropriating two thirds of the lands and leaving the rest to its former inhabitants. This must have caused quite an exodus. Cisalpine Gaul had not suffered to the same extent as central Italy from slavery and the exportation of free men, partly on account of its distance from Rome and partly from the difference of race. We know what happened in England at the time of the Saxon invasion. The Britons fled in all directions ; some crossed over into Brittany, others went into Wales and Cornwall, and others went to Ireland. The north of England is largely Celtic at the present time. It is more than probable that the same thing happened in Lombardy. It was soon after this that we hear of Florence, Pisa, and Genoa, cities built not like Rome and Perugia on the hill-tops, but in the valleys.

We may safely conclude, therefore, that the modern Italian is chiefly Gallic at the north and Grecian in the south, with a slight mixture of German in Lombardy and Etruscan in the central portion. National customs and use of the same language have given a certain uniformity to them all, but it is nearly as easy to distinguish a Milanese from a Neapolitan as an Englishman from a Scotchman. There is a tendency among emancipated slaves to flock to large cities, for they feel safer where there are many of them together, and we accordingly find in Rome and Naples a large nondescript population, villainous and servile, which does not appear to belong to any particular race.

It would have been better if Boethius, instead of writing the *Consolations of Philosophy*, had given us

an accurate description of what happened during his lifetime; for it is just these periods of history we would most like to know about,—the transition periods are the ones of which we have the least information. Look at the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, for instance. What a wretched failure that is, so far as throwing light on early English history is concerned. The explanation would seem to be that in epochs of change human nature suffers too much from outside pressure for men to realize consciously who and what they are. When a forest of pines is cut down a growth of oaks will often appear in its place. Did the reverse of this happen in Italy? When the great Roman oak was felled, did a more tender and fragile plant spring up in its place? Certain it is that the Italians of the fifteenth century were the very antipodes of Scipio's Romans. No other country has had two such diverse civilizations; both nearly incommensurable. In fact, no other country has produced more than one; and South America has not yet favored the world with any.

What were the characteristics of the ancient Romans? Everybody knows them; they have passed into a proverb. First, personal courage. In this they were only equalled by the Spartans, and have never been excelled. Catiline and "his haggard followers" fell in their places where they stood. Even the basest and most corrupt Romans were not lacking in martial valor.

Secondly, patriotic devotion. In their best days, after the second Punic war, the whole Latin community was like a drilled and disciplined army, in

which each person was consecrated religiously to a certain object, and that object was the welfare of the state. They had no existence as separate individuals, but were satisfied to merge their identity in the common good.

Thirdly, self-control ; in which they have never been equalled, as a people. It was only through this that their government was possible,—as the British Parliament is ruled by a respect for parliamentary custom. From this were also derived their firmness, constancy, and sobriety.

Fourthly, respect for women, not only in youth, but in old age. Cæsar delivered an oration at the funeral of his Aunt Julia, and made it an occasion of national importance. So Tacitus was of opinion that Tiberius restrained himself, out of respect for his mother, from those atrocious acts which he committed after her death.

Fifthly, they were the most orderly, systematic, and methodical of people ; and from this trait was finally derived that most inestimable of blessings, the civil law. They were not originally cruel, brutal, or sensual, though they became so in the decadence of the state. We do not hear in the annals of the Republic of cruel punishments, or of the torture of witnesses, except in the case of Jugurtha and one or two others. They were not so humane as the Greeks, but not half so ferocious as the Christians of mediæval Europe. Among modern nations the Prussians most nearly resemble them, both in character and history.

Art, however, is wellnigh impossible in such a

people, so long as they retain their conventional form and phalanx-like organization. For art requires, above all things, individual taste and original, independent, individual effort. The true artist must separate himself from his neighbors, his family, and even his friends. He must remain warm-hearted and sympathetic, but cannot expect others to sympathize with him. His life must be isolated and exceptional, "If you ask me what of Roman art," said Jarves. "I answer, nothing." This is not quite correct. They possessed neither painting, sculpture, nor music, but they had an architecture and literature of their own. Roman literature, though sufficiently original, was in a measure the reflection of Greek literature; but the Roman arch, with its manifold adaptations, was their original invention, and nothing could express better, symbolically, the organization of the Roman state than the phrase, "a weaving of arches."

Horace was the most characteristic of the Roman poets. He was born of one of the oldest Roman families, and in the organic construction of his odes, wrought so exquisitely and with unrivalled skill,—in their pithy sense, devoted patriotism, or accurate observation,—we find a still more sublimated symbol of the higher Roman life. Lucretius, however, if not an Etruscan by descent, was at least one in spirit, and it seems as if his tender feeling and pure pathos were a prediction of Dante's verse and Giotto's painting. Virgil came from Cisalpine Gaul and was prophetic of a still later period. When we stand before one of Raphael's *Madonnas*, we say, "What

can be more beautiful?" and when we read Virgil's description of night in the third book of the *Æneid*, we recognize the same style and manner. There is an historic significance in Dante's saying: "It was from Virgil that I learned the good style which does me honor."

Roman life is everywhere simple and consistent, but Italian mediæval life is complex and contradictory. Nothing is more difficult to understand. Everywhere we meet with the noblest virtues side by side with the most terrible depravity. Refined tastes, elevated thought, heroic self-devotion are accompanied by fierce hatreds, wanton immorality, and the most reckless crimes. These even appear sometimes in the same person. Truly Lucretia Borgia lived a wild kind of life in Rome, before she retired among the Apennines to become an exemplary wife and mother, but apparently without repentance for her former transgressions. The inspired monk of Florence, predicting that the Day of Judgment is at hand, exhorts his fellow-citizens to repentance, but does not scruple to further the execution of his political opponents. Cardinal Vincola makes use of his life-long reputation for veracity to obtain the papacy by wholesale promises and unprincipled deceptions. Bribery, murder, and even fratricide were too common to attract much attention. Everywhere there was intense passion, mental and physical activity, animation, enterprise, great designs, and wonderful achievements.

Their unstable politics and doubtful patriotism were equally unlike the Romans. Civil war was

incessant for centuries. Not only was the whole country divided into Guelfs and Ghibellines, but the different states and cities were constantly at war with each other, and in every city there were two factions, who carried on violent and sanguinary struggles for centuries. The leaders of the defeated party were banished to prevent their organizing for a fresh campaign. There were the same factions among the nobles, who poisoned and stabbed each other without remorse. He was a distinguished man who died a natural death. Men were assassinated in the market-place and the homicides escaped justice. It will help our understanding of Italian politics to remember that the Guelfs were the national party, whose head was the Pope, and the Ghibellines those who were disaffected. Dante was at first a Guelf and afterwards became a Ghibelline from his disgust at the atrocities of Pope Boniface, whom he has represented on the summit of Purgatory being scourged by a giant—that is, by King Philip the Fair of France.

It is not easy to determine how much of this should be attributed to the natural genius of the people, and how much was caused by their lack of a central government. Machiavelli attributes the disorders of his time to the temporal power of the pope, which was indeed a fertile source of intrigue and dissension. In Germany, after the death of Conradin, there was the same lack of political centralization, but it resulted in quite a different manner. There was continual warfare, but of an honest sort. The barons and their henchmen tilted continually

and ran each other through, by the right of private feud ; but it was not like Italy. At the same time the peasants were severely oppressed by the nobles, while the lower class of Italians appear to have been better off during the fifteenth century than at any period before or since.

The pope could not very well be a pope and a king also. It was not for the interest of the papacy that any single power in Italy should surpass all others. Still less was it for the pope's interest, and that of civilization, that any foreign power should become dominant in the country. The German emperor, however, had a legal right to that authority ; and though the Italians disputed this on the ground that the emperor was not an hereditary, but an elective sovereign, the Germans were not likely to trouble themselves about so small a point. Frederic Barbarossa invaded Lombardy to prevent the Milanese from tyrannizing over the smaller cities of which they had already destroyed one or two. This, at least, was his ostensible object. In 1151 Frederick the Third came there again and attempted to establish a court of arbitration between the cities, and issued a decree to have all the banished citizens recalled. This is said to have dissatisfied everybody, and filled the land with confusion ; in the midst of which the good Frederick died, either poisoned or worn out with care and vexation. Such politics have always been characteristic of the Celtic races.

It is not safe to measure civilization by any single rule. If we should judge of it by the safety of human life and respect for property, Russia and

China would probably stand in advance of the United States of America. The first and most important test, however, is the test of superior work. Any shoemaker who can satisfy his customers with a thoroughly made article is more civilized than some Wall Street stock gambler who exercises his rare ingenuity in cheating his neighbors. While a man is doing good work, he must be good himself. It steadies his life, quickens his observation, improves his judgment, and balances his mind. His son, with the advantage of an inherited tendency, will improve on the work of his father. On the contrary, he who does negligent, clumsy, and fraudulent work, injures his own nature equally with the material which he has in hand. It is thus that nations rise and fall. Goethe preached the gospel of good work in the eighteenth century, but all Italy celebrated it in the fourteenth and fifteenth. From the time of Dante to that of Raphael, we can trace through successive generations a continual improvement, until it reached that unrivalled excellence which is now looked upon almost as the result of a supernatural gift. This was not only the case in sculpture, painting, and architecture, but in mason-work, ironwork, the manufacture of cloth, and most of the smaller arts of civilized life.

After Raphael there was an equally steady decline, interrupted only by a brief and brilliant reaction in the seventeenth century. When Matthew Arnold regretted that there were nearly eight millions of people in Italy who could neither read nor write, Cardinal Antonelli replied: "Yes, but I think

you will find that they are generally correct in matters of good taste." This may be true in a certain way. The Italian peasants have excellent manners. They are more polite than the French peasantry, and more so than many English and American aristocrats. They have a good deal of class pride, and dress in a picturesque costume. Their fondness for bright colors is well enough suited for their mode of life. However, it is not probable that many of them could appreciate a new public building or an ancient picture.

As soon as we rise above the peasantry, faulty taste meets the eye everywhere. The skilful marble workers, so indispensable to modern sculptors, cannot be trusted to copy a bust of Cicero or Trajan. They invariably make it look pretty, and so spoil it. The women of the middle classes, many of whom are very beautiful, do not know how to dress as elegantly or as effectively as their French sisters; and the injury which has been done to great works of art during the last hundred years by incapable restorers tells a tale which implicates the highest government officials. The celebration of Michel Angelo's four hundredth birthday at Florence was not unjustly criticised as an ineffectual effort to regain national prestige.

It was not always so. On the flanks of the Alps and Apennines, along the borders of the Rhine, and scattered through France, Spain, and Germany are substantial relics of the past—the castles of the middle ages, which tell a different story. These and the Gothic cathedrals are the monuments of an

architectural civilization; something of which we can form to-day but a slight conception. Modern palaces and churches are not to be compared with them, either for grandeur, stateliness, or that human element without which no work of art can penetrate us. They were the result of the material and spiritual needs of their time, and these no longer exist. Like the pyramids and Greek temples, they seem to belong to the ground they stand on. How they were built, with what means, by what co-operation, and what power was evoked to obtain this, is yet only partially known. Successive generations worked upon them, and yet their construction was developed according to an harmonious plan. The castles were more substantial than Roman, the cathedrals more elegant than Grecian architecture. One would say those old builders had an eye for form. The Duomo of Florence is a finer work than St. Peter's at Rome, though the latter has a more elegant dome. St. Paul's, in London, is only a smaller edition of St. Peter's, without its brightness and lively ornamentation. Even the small parish churches which have survived from that time possess a grace and dignity which it is impossible to imitate.

Turin and Milan are now modern cities, adorned with French architecture of the second empire; but Pisa, Florence, Bologna, Parma, Siena have each a characteristic architecture of its own, which gives a distinction and seems to be peculiarly fitting to it. Even in Pistoja, a small bankrupt city more like a walled village, there is an old-fashioned elegance that is very charming, although the grass grows in

its streets, and the doors of its cathedrals are boarded up to prevent donkeys and goats from taking shelter there. Yet the eye meets with nothing incongruous in the way of architecture, and the dome of the cathedral is admirably proportioned to the roofs of the surrounding houses. The esplanade, or common, in front of it is separated from the street by two or three low terraces edged with a curbing of marble, not more than four inches in height, the effect of which is exceptionally pleasant and grateful to the eye. Pistoja was never an important place and it is now well-nigh deserted, but it has an architectural dignity which still survives in its poverty and decay.

Compare the rectangular, monotonous blocks of modern Florence, tasteful and quiet as they are, with the narrow, winding streets of the old city. How much more interesting is the *Via Tornabuoni* than the *Via Vittorio Emanuele*; how much more restful and refreshing in the dazzling sun of May and September.

So it is in Verona. We turn from the monuments of the Scaligers to admire the flexible iron fence, which surrounds them like a shirt of mail; and from that to the graceful ironwork balconies of the houses; and from that to the delicate columns of the porch of San Zenone; and are surprised that we have never heard of them before. We are struck with the purity of the façade of the church at San Miniato, and wonder why that of Santa Croce, which has lately been rebuilt in the same style, could not have been made equally beautiful. In Italy alone, the art of man has fairly surpassed the best efforts of nature.

Such refined taste could only be born of intellectual purity. It is the essence of disinterestedness. Let us consider the case of a lady, who is arranging her toilet for an evening party. It is necessary that she should appear to advantage, yet she cannot indulge the slightest desire to appear conspicuous; for as soon as she does, she fails of the right effect. She must subordinate her love of color, fine dress, and jewelry to the relation which these will have to her general appearance. If she takes too much pains, the effect will be over-studied; if she is careless, she will appear negligent. To disregard appearances entirely, is as bad as wearing a gaudy costume. She must strive to be simple, elegant, attractive, without intending to do so. She should be self-respectful without pride, and conscious of herself, without being self-conscious; and the final charm is not to be aware that she is well-dressed, but only that she has done the best she can.

Goethe has given in *Wilhelm Meister* a description of well-bred manners (and no one knew them better than he) which comes to the same point. We will quote it here, because *Wilhelm Meister* is a book which every one stands in awe of, but comparatively few have read.

“A well-bred carriage is difficult to imitate, for in strictness it is negative, and it implies a long-continued previous training. You are not required to exhibit in your manner anything that specially betokens dignity, for by this means you are like to run into formality and haughtiness; you are rather to avoid whatever is undignified and vulgar. You are

never to forget yourself ; you are to keep a constant watch upon yourself and others ; to forgive nothing that is faulty in your own conduct, in that of others neither to forgive too little nor too much. Nothing must appear to disturb you, nothing to agitate : you must never appear to be in haste, must ever keep yourself composed, retaining still an outward calmness, whatever storms may rage within. The noble character at certain moments may resign himself to his emotions ; the well-bred never. The latter is like a man dressed out in fair and spotless clothes ; he will not lean on anything ; every person will beware of rubbing against him."

What is this except "to be and not to be " at the same time ?

An architect obtains the commission for a public building. The ground and internal arrangements are prescribed to him ; but the material, height, proportions of doors and windows, moulding, cornice, and ornamentation he chooses according to his own judgment. In doing this he must not only consider what their relation will be to the structure as a whole, and, what very few architects now consider, the relation of that to the surrounding buildings ; but at every moment he is obliged to decide how each minor point will appear of itself. The difference of an inch in the width of a moulding, or of half as much in the mullion of a window, will give an effect of heaviness ; the effort to obtain classical simplicity has frequently resulted in a dry, economic look. He must avoid the unconscious imitation of other noted buildings and restrain himself cautiously

in the use of architectural forms for which he has an especial liking. Too free use of ornaments will give the effect of ostentation.

Through this labyrinth of possible errors there is no safe clue for him except one, and that is, *purity of feeling*; and how few buildings of the present time have escaped from one or more of them. It is the same with the coloring of a picture and the attitude of a statue. If we compare the Perseus of Canova with the one by Benvenuto Cellini, the arrogant, theatrical attitude of the former (as well as its other faults) is brought into relief by the modest, dignified bearing of the latter. Now what his statue appears to be, Cellini must have been himself. If there had been no modest manliness in him—and we do not forget the opening passage of his memoirs—there would not have been the same qualities in his work.

Whence came this pure feeling for beauty, which distinguished a whole nation for so long a period? It is always to be found in scattered individuals and sometimes even in whole families, but then rarely for more than a single generation. Was it, as Buckle and the Positivists believe, a mental resultant from the fine scenery of their native country,—the reflection of their purple mountains, refulgent sunsets, and deep azure seas? These may have had some share in it, as the fresh, dewy landscape of Holland may have given its depth and vigor to Dutch coloring, but this could only have been a small portion of the whole. The sea, and mountains, and stone pines, and gray olives are still there, and the sun shines up-

on them but not on Giotto and Cellini any longer. Quite as much to the point also is the fact that Italian scenery was the one subject which the great Italian masters never attempted to reproduce. The Venetians finally succeeded in painting excellent landscapes for background; but this is a rare instance where an exception succeeds in proving the rule; for in Venice there were no landscapes. Who could have perpetuated an Italian sunset so well as Titian; and next to Titian, Tintoretto? They both dwelt in the western quarter of the city where they could look every evening on the dazzling golden and crimson reflected upon the waters of the lagoon; but either it never occurred to them as a possible subject, or they did not consider it worthy of their art. Yet we find Aretino admiring the sunset from his palace window and writing to Titian that it is like his own beautiful coloring.

Nothing in history is more mysterious than the manner in which national vitality enters into a people, rises to a height, and then dies out again, like some great conflagration, leaving the ashes of civilization behind it. The Germans have a poetical way of accounting for this, namely, that the world-spirit takes up his abode first in one country and then in another, appearing at one time in art and again in politics or religion. This serves to express the character of it, and may be nearer the truth than is generally supposed; but it is not a scientific explanation.

Something has never yet come out of nothing. A great movement in humanity must have an active

cause at its origin, even if that cause be recondite or invisible to us. A meteor revolving in space comes in contact with the earth's atmosphere and is ignited. Oxygen and hydrogen, both invisible as air, come together and form visible liquid. England is weak under Saxon rule; the Normans come in with their iron discipline and great designs, and the two together form a mighty kingdom. It is the correlation and conservation of historical forces.

Let it be noticed, however, that two elements are always required for the production of a third. No simple substance ever passes through a series of changes in and of itself. The meteor does not become luminous until it strikes against the air. The Normans have disappeared from Normandy and Sicily, and Norway itself became a dependency of Denmark. It was only when grafted on the sturdy Saxon tree that they survived and extended their branches. It is evident, also, that only such elements can combine favorably which, like oxygen and hydrogen, have a predestined affinity for each other.

Now, it has long since been noticed that the origin of all art has a close relation with religious observances. It is equally well known that the first poems were hymns, the first architecture was a temple, the earliest statues were idols, and for the first century and a half Italian art was devoted almost exclusively to the representation of Madonnas and saints. For five hundred years before Dante, mankind had been filled with such intense, fervid, religious feeling as only the Puritans since then have

given a comparatively short-lived example of. It was an epoch of deep-rooted faith ; such faith as carries men over stupendous obstacles, makes hardship a luxury, and death the happiest consummation. Never before or since has the Christian church possessed such power over the minds of all classes. The exhortations of priests, the stories of saints and martyrs, fermented in men's heads until they were ready for any desperate and incredible action. When the people of a whole continent become agitated in this manner, great and surprising developments are to be expected.

The Saracens must have been as much astonished by the crusades as Louis XVI. was by the attack on the Bastille. What could have stirred up those iron-clad Franks to descend upon them in a succession of avalanches. No doubt many of the crusaders went from love of adventure, and many from expectation of spoil ; but, on the whole, it was the most heroic, disinterested movement in humanity that the world has seen. St. Louis of France and Frederic Barbarossa were the typical characters of it : two such just sovereigns, prudent statesmen, and stainless men, if we are to believe their contemporaries, that time has rarely equalled them since. They both went on two expeditions to the Holy Land (neglecting the interests of their subjects for the cross), and lost their lives there. But the sepulchre of Christ was empty, and the crusaders returned dissatisfied. The attempt to realize spirituality by fighting the infidels had not succeeded ; but the same impulse now turned itself inward to produce from

the depths of man's consciousness Italian art and the Gothic cathedrals, while the bird-like songs of the troubadours and minnesingers gave notice that the spring-time of modern Europe was near at hand.

The fable of Proserpine living half of the year underground with Pluto, and the other half above in the light of day, has its parallel also in the development of thought. Ideas may lie concealed in the human mind, but the longer this happens, the more certain it is that they will come to the surface when circumstances are favorable, and appear in a tangible shape. Art has therefore been correctly defined as *thought* expressed in *form*. It was the deep religious enthusiasm of the early Christians that kept Italian taste pure and made Italian painting what we now marvel at. The arts of painting and sculpture languish in our own time, because there is no deep-rooted feeling in the community with regard to them. The Florentines carried Cimabue's immature *Madonna* in procession through the city; but *Madonnas* and *Last Judgments* are no longer possible, for they have not the same meaning for us as formerly. The world-spirit has gone in another direction.

Religious impulse then provided the motive power, but how shall we account for the technical skill? Emotion dies out after a time and has to be replaced by that steady perseverance, which alone will keep eye and hand to the right mark, day after day and year after year. "Influence," Washington said, "is not government"; and, though people may

be ever so full of noble sentiments, these can never take the place of thorough and systematic training. It is my belief that they obtained this through the severe military discipline of the feudal period. Hand-to-hand fighting requires a certain skill, of which the modern soldier only knows by hearsay. To stand in line and be shot at for a number of hours will put a man's courage to the proof, even more perhaps than the life or death concentration of a few moments' fencing, but it does not develop the same quickness of eye and steadiness of hand. In the tournaments of the middle ages, corporeal strength was of less value than skill in poising the lance and good horsemanship. The lack of government protection compelled each individual to rely more entirely on himself; and this was as true of the city burgher as for the knights and retainers of the nobility. Whatever vocation a man might have, he was obliged to be accomplished also in the use of warlike weapons, while the more timid sort took refuge in the monasteries or the priesthood. Such a mode of life must have been invigorating, physically and mentally. The nearest approach to it now is to be found in the training of our college athletes and the self-denial of the hospital surgeon. There is no reason why we should return to it, but it is well to recognize the peculiar value that it had.

We find the same background of military discipline behind Greek sculpture. Too little attention has been paid to the period of Hellenic history between the first Olympiad and the Persian wars. The fact that we know so little of it proves that it must have

been an era of unusual peace and prosperity. There may have been a good deal of small fighting, but no very serious wars, except the two Messenian wars, or else Thucydides would have mentioned them. We can judge of it fairly by its results. We know what the Spartan military discipline was, and that the Athenians were well-prepared for the battle of Marathon. No doubt Sophocles and Æschylus were better poets for having been good soldiers. The military training of Italy lasted long after the decline in religion had commenced. It is only in this way that one can account for the prodigious achievements of Raphael, Tintoretto, and Paul of Verona. Michel Angelo took part in the siege of Florence, and Cellini, who was a terrible fighter, pointed the cannon in the defence of the Castle of St. Angelo against the army of Bourbon and Orange.

However it may have happened, it is, at all events, certain that, next to the Greeks, the mediæval Italians were the most gifted and versatile race that has yet appeared. Prince Eugene said that a man should have an Italian head, a German heart, and French legs. Napoleon, Mirabeau, Montecuculi, and many other great generals and statesmen of a later date were of Italian descent. It will be noticed that the first three discoverers of the western world were all Italians, not because they were better sailors than the English or Spanish, but more daring and enterprising navigators.

It was remarkable how the mediæval Italians combined the most diverse and opposite qualities ;

like steel that is tempered both for hardness and flexibility. They were not more courageous than crafty, nor more bold than cautious, and while they gave sufficient proof of their honest intentions they were also capable of the darkest dissimulation. Their gaiety of spirit was fully matched by their keen sense of the tragic element in life; nor were they more quick-witted than profoundly contemplative. Their fierce outbursts of passion were varied by instances of heroic self-control. No people were ever more industrious or capable of more perfect repose. They were not more tenacious in the pursuit of their ends than ingenious in the methods by which they obtained them. The force of Michel Angelo is not more remarkable than the delicacy of his feeling, and the stern severity of Dante is relieved by the feminine tenderness of his pity. A people of bold and lively contrasts, but skilfully and harmoniously blended.

There are more beautiful buildings, treasures of art, interesting monuments, and fine scenery withal in Italy than in the other countries of Europe taken together. The Cornici road surpasses the Rhine-land, and the Italian lakes are beyond all comparison. There is nothing like the purple haze of the Mediterranean, or the tender blue of the Italian sky.

LEONARDO DA VINCI

WHILE sailing through the Gulf Stream, the door of a ship's cabin came floating by.

Its hinges had rusted off, and it had come up from the bottom of the sea, perhaps after a hundred years. Who could tell where that ship lies, or what men were on board of her, or what women mourned for them in distant lands. If the ocean could be drained what a spectacle the vessels that have been lost in it would present ; what treasures would be reclaimed ! Time is like an ocean on which we float for a while and then disappear in it. What tragedies, comedies, as well as biographies of unknown heroes have been lost in it ! Whole epochs of history of which almost nothing remains to us have been swallowed up by it. The Alexandrian Library has not been the only intellectual loss that mankind has suffered.

Among all the Italians, none offer a finer subject for biography than Leonardo da Vinci ; but such a book has not yet been written nor is it ever likely to be. He remains to us almost as much of an enigma as the strange heads he used to draw. He had no family, and though he must have made friends in

plenty, few of them are known to us. The Tuscans had a happy faculty of preserving traditions about their favorite artists; but Leonardo left Florence at the beginning of his career. He lived seventeen years in Milan where his profession was not so much venerated, and afterwards went to Paris to disappear there altogether from our view. His life must have been rich in varied experiences, and a graphic account of it would be as highly prized as his own portrait. Vasari gives some amusing anecdotes of him, but not a very substantial account.

From the height of Bellosguardo, looking down the valley of the Arno, the spur of the mountain can be seen far away, beyond which lies the castle and hamlet of Vinci, where Leonardo was born. The notion that illegitimate children are brighter than others is not substantiated by the facts of history, for Leonardo appears to have been the only genius of the first rank who was born outside the marriage tie. His mother was a servant girl, and in this case the end would seem to justify the means, for a more magnificent specimen of humanity was never known on earth. There is no doubt that he might have been equally great as an artist, a poet, or a man of affairs. Never had such versatility been combined with so much strength. He was a compendium of all graces and forces. The expression of his face, as we note it in his own portrait, is rather severe, but of his manly beauty there can be no question. In physical strength he surpassed both Tintoret and Michel Angelo; though his figure was not so elegant as Tintoret's, for he

had the shoulders of a Hercules. He could bend bars of iron with his hand, and yet his touch was so soft, that no other artist has painted with such fineness and delicacy. As a boy, he soon outstripped his instructors. He read arithmetic and geometry as if they were stories for children, and whatever others attempted to teach him he seemed to have learned in some mysterious manner already ; he soon became proficient in all the arts from music to architecture as well as in practical engineering and all the sciences that were known in his time. He was also an admirable writer.

What is meant by a man's nature, as distinguished from his character, is always revealed in an artist's own works. A *genre* painter will have a nature of the same kind, but an historical painter requires breadth of vision and a comprehensive intellect. He should be as ardent as an orator and as sympathetic as a woman. The most difficult thing in art is to find a man who unites greatness of design with delicacy of feeling.

At the foundation of Leonardo's nature there was that profound religious faith which the engravings of his *Last Supper* have celebrated all over the world. We might know it otherwise from his Madonnas, though they do not perhaps express it to the same extent. This is indeed the fountain of all virtue, and where it is also united with a strong will, you may be sure of a man who will cut out for himself an independent path in life. If Leonardo had lived three centuries earlier, he would have been a crusader and a celebrated fighter. Of his sincerity and purity

of feeling, his own portrait bears witness again ; but this is only a consequence of what has already been stated ; for even if the religious devotion of Madame de Maintenon or of James II. were wholly sincere it could never have been other than of a superficial kind. He had nothing of the austerity of Michel Angelo, but could suit himself in an amiable manner to persons of every rank without compromising his own dignity. The story that he died in the arms of the king of France is not incredible, for Francis was an old-fashioned sovereign who could recognize in Leonardo the true brotherhood of royalty.

Yet he was not without some peculiarities. His dilatory method of working is not to be accounted for so much from laziness or from being distracted by a variety of interests, as from a whimsical turn of mind in which he indulged himself too much, and which led him into curious experiments from which small good was derived. It is strange that he could not have realized that the time he spent on music and engineering, though far from being wasted, would have been employed to better advantage on works of art, which would last for centuries, instead of for a day or a few years. The tedious manner in which he elaborated his paintings has always been a cause of wonder ; and so has his comparatively early death at sixty-seven ; for with such a constitution he ought to have lived to be a hundred and twenty.

It is a proof of the respect in which the arts were held in Italy at that time, that Leonardo's father

should have educated him as a painter; for a boy of such ability would hardly be permitted to adopt that profession at the present day if he had a father to look after his interests. Ser Piero da Vinci placed his son in charge of an artist with a most appropriate name, Andrea del Verrocchio, or Andrew of the True Eye, who was both painter and sculptor and worker in terra-cotta; the last being an art which requires a great deal of skill for a comparatively small result. Here the same course of events followed as before, and Verrocchio soon found that Leonardo learned faster than he was able to teach him. The history of Italian art is full of poetic legends, and Vasari says that Verrocchio was so much disgusted at the superiority of an angel which Leonardo painted in his *Baptism of Christ*, that he relinquished painting altogether and confined himself thereafter to sculpture and terra-cotta. A portion of this tale must be true, for Verrocchio's *Baptism of Christ* is still to be seen in the Academy at Florence, with the angel of young Da Vinci in it, easily recognizable by the superior grace and strength of its drawing, and sweetness of expression. No quarrelling ensued, however, between master and pupil, and the alliance between the two ultimately bore more valuable fruit.

This happened about 1470, and in or about 1484 Verrocchio was invited to Venice to model the equestrian statue of their deceased commander, General Coleoni. This is the only one of Verrocchio's works which has made him famous, though it has not the noble simplicity of the statue of Marcus

Aurelius. Verrocchio has, however, conquered difficulties in the treatment of its details, which the unknown Greek sculptor of Aurelius never thought of. The horse of Coleoni is represented as pacing, and the general himself is rising in his stirrups. This and the Cromwellian sternness of his face give an expression of motion and force such as were never united by Michel Angelo but once. It has the highest distinction of style and character.

How did it happen that Verrocchio, whom Leonardo could excel in painting at the age of forty, could create such a masterpiece at fifty-two? The conclusion is irresistible, that master and pupil had changed places; Leonardo had become the instructor, and Andrea the learner.

There are other evidences of this. The treatment of the horse's mane and tail, and of the horns of the saddle, partakes of a peculiar ingenuity which is not quite natural, and yet we cannot help liking it. The same may be noticed in many of Leonardo's drawings, especially in the sketch of the old warrior with the winged helmet. There never was such a tail as this of Coleoni's horse. It has been arranged with as much care as a lady's coiffeur; one whisk would spoil the whole of it. Besides this, there is a stiffness observable in Leonardo's figures, as if the persons he represented had a good deal of backbone. This is conspicuous in the statue of Coleoni, and more appropriate there than in some of his Madonnas. A professor in the school of design at Venice warned an American lady who was learning to model there not to look too much at the statue of Coleoni

for fear her own work would become affected by its rigidity. Before Verrocchio had finished the statue, for he was five or six years at work on it, Leonardo went to Milan. It is more than probable that he visited Venice during that time, and gave Andrea the benefit of his judgment. It is possible, also, that Andrea went to Milan to visit Leonardo. The statue shows Leonardo's influence as plainly as the Roman Raphael was influenced by Michel Angelo. It has his force, his ingenuity, and his intense vitality. It seems as if the bronze general was going to ride through the wall opposite, and that you could hear the clanking of his armor. It is a wonderful statue.

There was a chord of mystery vibrating through Leonardo's life from beginning to end. None of the contemporary writers mention meeting him, or are able to account for his mode of living. He came and went in a mysterious manner. Vasari speaks of his travelling with a retinue of servants. If this be true, how did he obtain the funds for such extravagance? It could not have been from the sale of paintings; or if he obtained it so, the mystery is what has become of them? Of pictures that he finished before his thirtieth year, less than half a dozen are known to exist.

The earliest painting attributed to Leonardo extant is a Madonna in the little old church of Sant' Onofrio in Rome; but its authenticity has lately been disputed by Woltmann and others, and with excellent reason; for we do not find any trace in it of Leonardo's characteristic style, nor of the power and



HEAD OF MEDUSA, BY LEONARDO DA VINCI

In Uffizzi Gallery, Florence

majesty of his later works. It shows, however, the correct use of observation and a truthfulness to nature, with a freedom from self-restraint, such as is difficult to account for at the time this painting was produced; for it is evidently a work of the fifteenth century. The donor is a half-length figure of a square-built, elderly man, drawn in profile, and holding his cap before him with both hands, as if he were slightly embarrassed. The faces are evidently portraits, though that of the Madonna may be slightly idealized. Her hair is in the fashion of thirty years ago; two wrinkled plaits coming down over her temples and in front of the ears. The infant Jesus is full of life and energy, and it bestowing a blessing on his visitor in the papal fashion. His attitude is original and interesting, and the folds of the Virgin's gown on which he rests are remarkable for their breadth and pliant softness. The portrait of the worthy burgher describes the man to us without a touch of flattery.

The unfinished painting of an *Adoration of the Magi* in the Uffizi is more likely to be genuine, though if so it must have been a very early work (perhaps 1475), and suffers from overwrought action as well as other faults. There is, however, an attractive Leonardesque manner in the pose of the Madonna, and a daring freedom of attitude in the drawing of the *Three Kings*. In the background there is a weird landscape, including old Roman ruins and figures in strange attitudes. We do not discover in it the promise of his later development.

A genius of the first rank is almost inevitably a

reformer. Any man who is earnestly desirous of seeing things done in the right way will become a reformer in his own circle ; for there is always plenty of correction and improvement to be made. It is said that Leonardo anticipated Bacon in his statement of the inductive method of reasoning, though he did not carry it to completeness. It is enough that he understood it, and with its help he produced a revolution in art like that which the inductive method finally effected in science. The times were favorable for this, but it required the right man to point out the way. Otherwise Italian painting might have degenerated into a servile imitation of the Greek.

Leonardo did not go to the Greek but to Nature, who, if applied to in the right spirit, gives both wisdom and strength. Of all Italian artists of that time he was the least affected by Hellenic art. It required a man who could bend iron bars to turn the course of Italian painting from that which it had followed for two centuries. It was like changing the bed of a river. Leonardo had a nature of such unswerving veracity, that he could not paint until he felt sure of the ground he stood on. He determined to commence at the very beginning, and lay a foundation of his own. He studied anatomy ; made a thorough investigation of light and shade ; and discovered ærial perspective. This must have occupied a large portion of his time, which was saved for Raphael, Titian, and all others since then. It had lately been discovered that the earth was round. Neither should we represent men as flat,

any longer, thought Leonardo. So he wrote down: "The true artist is he who can give to an object roundness and fulness."

His treatise on painting bears some resemblance to Bacon's *Novum Organum*, especially in its general structure. It is clearly and forcibly written, and so concise that the first two pages will give a beginner occupation sufficient for a year. On the second page he says: "By equality is meant that you do not blend the robust and firm muscles of man with feminine softness." How many pupils in our drawing-schools, of one or two years' standing, would be able to make this distinction; or to indicate the difference between various kinds of cloth?

The book is a compendium of original observations. It is remarkable not only how much he saw, but how much he remembered. "Consider," he says, "attentively the measure of joints, in which Nature is apt to vary a great deal, and imitate her example by doing the same." He introduced the new element into drawing,—namely, *action*. Previously Italian painting, for the most part, like Greek sculpture, had concerned itself with persons either in repose or in a condition closely allied to it. If any form of activity was introduced, as in the *Stoning of Stephen*, they were drawn in an awkward and constrained manner. Leonardo made a series of studies of the human body, in almost every variety of action, with explanations proving how the movement of one member would affect the position of all the others. He thus formed a set of rules by which artists could instruct themselves, to see more correctly when

drawing from living models, and how to avoid mistakes in drawing without them. The original charts with which he illustrated each theorem are a small treasury of art in themselves. To exemplify the complex equipoise of bodies, he made a drawing of Hercules lifting Anteus into the air, who is expiring with a most unhappy expression. They are in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, with twelve volumes more of writings and studies. So in this direction, at least, Leonardo was not lacking in application.

He proves his breadth of mind by admonishing artists not to despise the opinions of those who, though not being painters themselves, are interested in the fine arts (such as are now called critics). "For," he says, "we know that, although a man be not a painter, he may have just notions of the forms of men—whether a man has a hump on his back, a thick leg, or a large hand; whether he be lame, or have any other defect. Now, if we know that men are able to judge of the works of Nature, should we not think them more able to detect our errors?"

Some of his concluding remarks are very amusing. He says that women are to be represented in modest and reserved attitude, "their arms drawing near each other, or folded about the body"; but "children are to be represented with quick and contorted motions, when they are sitting; but when standing, with fearful and timid motions." Such precepts are better suited to religious pictures than they would be to our illustrated periodicals. The following represents a side of Leonardo's character which we shall have occasion to notice again:

“ If you wish, therefore, to make a chimera, or imaginary animal, appear natural (let us suppose a serpent), take the head of a mastiff, the eyes of a cat, the ears of a porcupine, the mouth of a hare, the brows of a lion, the temples of an old cock, and the neck of a sea-tortoise.”

I knew a landscape painter who did not believe in making sketches except when the spirit inclined him to do so, which was usually at ten in the morning, or at four in the afternoon. Leonardo had a different theory :

“ When you are well instructed in perspective, and know perfectly how to draw the anatomy and forms of different bodies or objects, it should be your delight to observe and consider in your walks the different actions of men ; when they are talking or quarrelling ; when they laugh, and when they fight. Attend to their positions, and to those of the spectators ; whether they are attempting to separate those who fight, or merely lookers-on. Be quick in sketching these with slight strokes in your pocket-book, which should always be about you, and made of stained paper, as you ought not to rub out. . . . For that reason take care never to be without a little book, for the purpose of sketching those various motions, and also groups of people standing by. This will teach you how to compose history.”

He considers it a favorable sign in a young painter, that his judgment should be better than his work, for then he will be more likely to improve through continual self-criticism ; and concludes with an exhortation to study nature continually :

“Whoever flatters himself that he can retain in his memory all the effects of Nature is deceived, for our memory is not so capacious : therefore consult Nature for everything.”

The only two of Leonardo's pictures which have preserved their original coloring, are the *Head of Medusa*, in the Uffizi at Florence, and his own portrait, in the room devoted to the portraits of artists. It is a pleasant natural coloring, inclining to yellow rather than to red, and very deep and rich in the shadows.

The authenticity of the *Head of Medusa* has been doubted, but on what ground I do not know. It is a question like the authenticity of Shakespeare, for if Leonardo did not paint it, who could have? Titian's, Veronese's, Raphael's *Madonnas*, all must yield to it in technical perfection. The story of his youthful trick of the *rotella*, on which he painted a composite monster more terrific than this, proves his inclination for such subjects. Vasari attributes it to him, but adds that he left it unfinished. This may refer to the background, which it is somewhat difficult to make out, and perhaps to Leonardo's extravagant idea of perfection. As to the head itself, it could not be more perfectly finished if nature had made it.

It is certainly a fearful subject ; the severed head with livid face, and the snarled wreath of snakes for hair. It must have required strong nerves to work on such a subject day after day. Few men could do it. If the sight of such a monster were possible, we should not look at it twice whether we were

turned to stone by it or not ; but art, like distance, lends enchantment, and such art as Leonardo's makes even a Medusa attractive. The face seems familiar to us. We fancy that like Heine's devil, we have met her somewhere in society : at Mount Desert, perhaps, or other fashionable resort. That she did not quite freeze our blood was owing to the fine summer weather. The picture holds its own against all others in the room.

Leonardo's portrait looks like a man of forty, though he was probably younger when it was painted. His long yellow hair and full beard give him an appearance of age beyond his years. His hair is very light for an Italian, and this with his powerful physique suggests that he may have been descended from the Goths or Lombards. What nationality his mother belonged to is not known. His artist's cap is graceful and becoming, but we wish he would take it off and permit us to see the shape of his head. His features are all strong and finely cut. He has not the scrutinizing look of Titian, or the tender sensibility of Tintoretto, nor Cellini's fearless independence ; but is calm, dignified, majestic. He looks like a king among the painters about him.

As a portrait it has not the atmosphere of some of Titian's, but for all that it surpasses them in vitality, as it does all other paintings except the *Mona Lisa*. The subject, too, is of importance ; for what ideal is superior to one of the greatest of men. The microscopic fineness with which it is painted would seem like a waste of time, but perhaps it was

only in this manner that he could give such vitality. It was not till twenty years later that Titian and Raphael discovered the advantage of a more vigorous handling on the accessories of a picture. The eyes of this portrait are like intelligent diamonds. Only an eye such as Leonardo's could have painted them. With Michel Angelo's *Fates* and Raphael's *Madonna of the Goldfinch*, it constitutes an invaluable trio.

Leonardo spent the best portion of his life at the Milan court,—from thirty to forty-five. That his time there was not better expended was owing largely to the character of the Duke. Ludovico was more amiable and indulgent than Julius II., but not nearly so intelligent. He preferred his brother's glory to his own, but he knew not how to make good use of the treasure which fortune had placed in his way. How did it happen that he permitted Leonardo to paint his *Last Supper* on the refectory wall of a monastery, when it might have hung on canvas in his own dining-hall, and have remained in a well preserved condition till the present day? He appreciated Leonardo's music, his poetry, and his fine conversation. Leonardo was a rare ornament at his court, a privileged guest, whom everybody honored and delighted in; but what he gained in temporary pleasure he lost in posthumous fame.

If Michel Angelo was eighteen months at work on the heroic statue of Julius II., four years would not be too much to allow Leonardo for the statue of Francesco Sforza. There can be little doubt



PORTRAIT OF LEONARDO DA VINCI (BY HIMSELF)

Uffizzi Gallery, Florence

that it was the finest equestrian statue, at least, of modern times. Francesco was a great soldier, who fought his way to a throne in an equally courageous and irresponsible manner. Next to Carmagnola he was the greatest of the Italian *condottieri*, and a much better subject for art than Coleoni, whom he defeated and captured; but only to release him on the following day, upon learning that his father-in-law, the Duke Visconti, was dead, and that the popular party had seized the government. This gave Francesco a fair title to the dukedom, which Coleoni assisted him in reclaiming; and peace was established between Venice and Lombardy. The parallel between the relations of these two captains and the artists who modelled their statues is surprising enough. When the French captured Milan in 1498 they made a target of the statue of Sforza: a piece of wanton vandalism unequalled since the fall of Rome.*

THE LAST SUPPER.

The *Last Supper* was painted in the priory of Santa Maria della Grazie, which is itself of importance in the history of architecture. A few steps from the street brings us within those precincts, twice sanctified by religion and art. There is little enough left of it. The faces are mostly blank, and only the outlines and attitudes tell us of its former magnifi-

* Vasari thinks that the statue was never cast in bronze, and that it was the model that the French soldiers destroyed: but how could it happen that the model was left in the open air, or any place where it might serve as a target? The matter rests in obscurity.

cence. The greatness of its design is still apparent. The shape of those heads is much in itself, and the tenderly inclining figure of Christ is more affecting than words. It is a ruin as noble as the Parthenon, as pathetic as Melrose Abbey. Beyond this the original painting cannot help us. We are obliged to resort to Leonardo's sketches and to Raphael Morghen's engraving.

Vasari writes of Leonardo with enthusiasm, but evidently was not well informed with regard to the *Last Supper*. His story of the prior who complained to Ludovico that the work remained too long unfinished, is not likely to have been an invention, but his statement that Leonardo never painted the head of Christ in the picture is a long way from the mark. That he was reluctant to represent the divine person in human form is significant and credible, from the fact that in his earliest rude sketch of the subject he has represented Christ with his head bowed sorrowfully over the table, while St. John, next to him, seems wholly unnerved at the revelation, and the other apostles express their surprise and indignation in a variety of ways. Judas, also, is left out of this design apparently, for there are only twelve persons seated at the table, and the second space on the right of John is vacant. This tends to corroborate the anecdote of the Prior and Duke Ludovico, as well as the reasons alleged by Leonardo for not completing his work. The two apostles at the extreme right in this preliminary study are more carefully finished than the others, and both very fine. One is an elderly man with intellectual forehead and wavy

patriarchal hair, like a Protestant clergyman of superior quality; the other is a spiritual-minded youth such as Raphael was fond of drawing, but of a more vigorous type than Raphael's.

Leonardo seems to have felt the same aversion that Protestants do now to the representation of incarnated deity. He might portray Christ as a boy, or even as a religious teacher, but not in the hour of divine martyrdom. How far apart this places him from Michel Angelo, who painted Jehovah again and again. Leonardo is reported to have informed the Duke that he could not hope to find on earth a model that would answer for the Saviour of mankind, nor yet had he attained the power of presenting it to himself in imagination, with all that perfection of beauty and celestial grace which appeared to him to be demanded for the due representation of the Divinity incarnate. We do not look at a head of Christ by Dürer or Perugino with the same feeling that we regard one painted in our own time. People do not like such subjects any longer. Holman Hunt's fine picture, *The Shadow of the Cross*, in which Jesus is represented at a carpenter's bench, created no interest in London except as an illustration of technical skill,—that is, simply as a work of art. The final excellence of mediæval painting is that the technical skill was always subordinated in it to the expression of an idea. That is the reason why it goes to our hearts.

Leonardo's study of Christ which Braun has made familiar to us, is similar to, but not the same as the one he finally adopted in the *Last Supper*, and it is a

lofty conception of a man who has been worn to a shadow with commiseration for the sins and sufferings of mankind. It is too fragile and feminine a type for the manly heads that would have surrounded it. It represents the Christ who said, "If a man smite thee on one cheek, turn to him the other also"; not the Christ of the tribute money, nor of the sermon on the mount. We require to have all three comprehended in the ideal Saviour. The Christ in Morghen's engraving is handsomer and something more majestic, yet without expressing dissatisfaction there would seem to be more humility in him than would be required for one sent with authority and on a divine mission.

In the Albertina collection at Vienna, there is a small head of Christ by Leonardo, most delicately and gracefully drawn, which may have been one of his experiments for the *Last Supper*. Its features are more classic and its expression less pathetic than in the drawing of the Brera gallery, but it would not seem to be the design that he finally adopted. In this sketch the hair is exquisitely arranged in points so as to give the suggestion of a crown of thorns.

In its original condition it must have been the greatest picture ever painted. The Sistine *Madonna* may be compared with it, or Tintoretto's *Crucifixion*; and the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, as a whole, is supposed to be without a rival; but I think we could have better spared Michel Angelo's *Last Judgment* than Leonardo's *Last Supper*. In what painting, or convocation of living persons, could you find such an assemblage of noble heads? Notice



HEAD OF CHRIST, BY LEONARDO DA VINCI
(TAKEN FROM "THE LAST SUPPER")

Milan

also the classic simplicity of its details ; the oblong, cross-legged table with its cloth tied into knots at the corners ; a custom which still prevails in Italy. Vasari refers to the skilful manner in which the texture of the cloth was represented, as if it were a proverbial saying. From the texture of the tablecloth to the sublimated beauty of Christ there was only perfection on perfection. Its dramatic action is without a fault, and altogether we feel that here the best qualities of Raphael and of all great artists have been united.

It is the fourth act of a tragedy. Christ and his disciples have met to eat together for the last time. He is aware of this, and though they are ignorant of it their minds are already full of apprehension. They have become endeared to one another by mutual sympathy of the highest kind, by co-operation and spiritual association, but they have never felt this so much as now when danger is imminent. Christ makes the fatal disclosure, and in a moment all is excitement. Though he feels apprehensive of his own fate, this is overmatched by his grief at the perfidy of Judas. It is a feeling not easily to be described,—that painful sinking in the breast, when we realize that our confidence has been fatally misplaced. Leonardo knew it, and how to represent it. St. John is the only one of the disciples whose face repeats the expression of Christ. With him, however, it is chiefly solicitude for the fate of his master. The similarity and the difference between the two are remarkable, and it is no wonder that Leonardo found difficulty with this portion of his

painting. Peter is a splendid contrast to John. True man of action, and in appearance not unlike Leonardo himself, he has risen to his feet with the idea of taking energetic measures. The traitor is to be expelled at once. It does not occur to either John or Peter that any one will accuse them of perfidy; but the other apostles are not so self-forgetful. They are full of indignation, but they also wish to prove their own innocence. Judas, whose guilt is indicated by the darkness of his face, sits shut up within himself. In no other painting is such grandeur of design united with intellectual power and spiritual loveliness. The head of the *Apollo Belvedere* has been called superhuman. What then shall we say of a head like Leonardo's St. Peter.

The popularity of a picture has a deeper significance than that of a book. We may be entertained by a mediocre novel, but we do not return to it again and again, as we do to Shakspeare and Thackeray. When we hang a picture on our walls we want one that we shall never become tired of. It is for this reason that Leonardo's *Last Supper*, Correggio's *Magdalen*, the Sistine *Madonna*, and *Madonna della Sedia* have become the household gods of modern civilization.

MONA LISA.

Where could M. Taine, the literary critic, have acquired the notion that the *Mona Lisa* was the portrait at once of a nun and a courtesan? Truly,

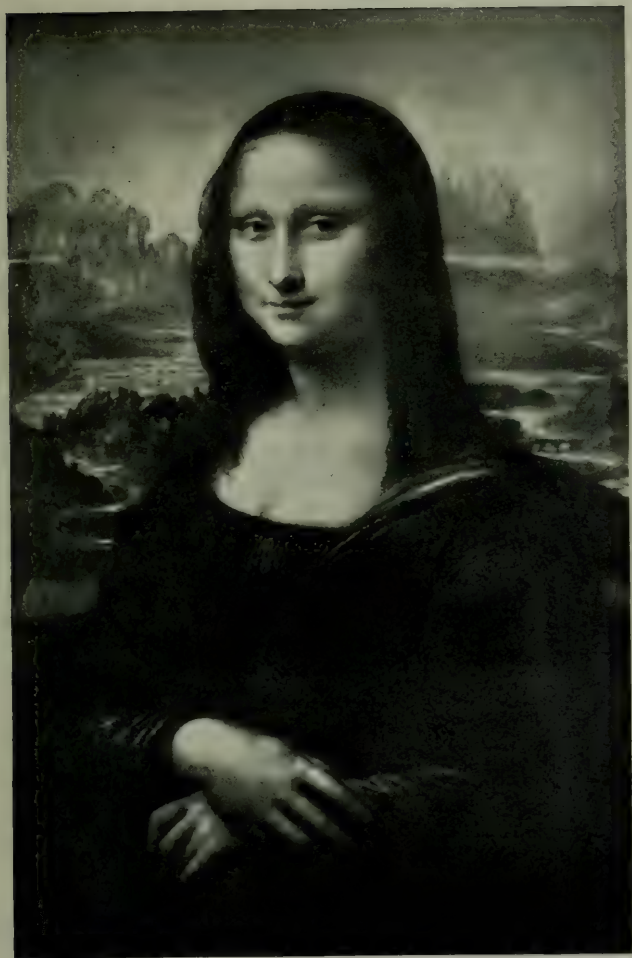
it was a French imagination, like that of the special correspondents to our newspapers, particularly in time of war. She was an honest Florentine lady named Lisa Giacondo, and her husband was Leonardo's most devoted friend. It was only for friendship that he would have undertaken to paint her, for he could have obtained orders without number if he had been willing to work for money. Even Louis XII. could not obtain a portrait from him. Tintoretto painted an excellent portrait of a King of France in three days, but Leonardo was four years working on the *Mona Lisa*; off and on, according to his fashion. This seems to have been an idiosyncrasy of the man's nature for which there was no remedy. We may suppose that he spent so much time on it in order to give it vitality.

Faded as it now is to a dull olive brown, this portrait is more lifelike than any other painting in the Louvre, or perhaps anywhere else. The other paintings in the great hall are like pictures compared to it, and the people who look at it become vitalized by its presence. Opposite to it is Paul of Verona's greatest work, but there is not the life in it that there is in *Mona Lisa*. What must it have been when the coloring was in good condition. Vasari writes with enthusiasm of the freshness and transparency of her complexion, and the exquisite manner in which the hair and even the eyelashes were painted. To judge from this in color and *chiaroscuro* it may have been not unlike a Correggio. However, it has long since ceased to be considered a portrait, and has become an ideal. She is the smiling woman of the Louvre;

but what is the meaning of her smile? That, no one has fathomed yet. Is she smiling over a secret which is never to be revealed? Whether it be so or not, the kernel of the composition is involved in a mystery.

We have observed before that there was a mysterious side to Leonardo's character, and here we find it expressed without reservation in his work. So much the greater the man and his painting. It is from this sense of mystery that the purest religious feeling is evolved. The religions of all races have originated in mystery, and no philosophy is of much value that is not founded on it.

The Brahmans believe, or formerly did, that the earth rests on a tortoise; but what does the tortoise rest on? That they do not dare to contemplate. All the discoveries of science have not solved the enigma that is conveyed in this legend. The earth it is true is held in position by gravity; but how did gravity originate? Beyond the solar system are the stars; but what is beyond the stars? Space can have no limit. All the greatest minds have shared largely in this element. Homer was no less a mystery than Shakspeare. Goethe's writings are full of it. Napoleon never explained himself, and was an enigma to his nearest friends. Aristotle expressed it when he said that the ultimate reality was self-activity. I think Leonardo owned a larger share of mystery than Michel Angelo. It gives an exceptional charm to his work and makes his drawings perpetually interesting.



"MONA LISA," BY LEONARDO DA VINCI

(In Salon Carré) Louvre Gallery, Paris

LA VIERGE AU BAS-RELIEF.

The painting in the Louvre by this title, and the duplicate in the possession of the Earl of Warwick, are clearly the work of Luini, for they have his scale of coloring—and very beautiful it is but wholly different from Leonardo's, either in his own portrait or in the faded condition of the *Mona Lisa*—and it is only necessary to compare their painting with those of the genuine Leonardos to recognize them as the product of an inferior though eminent artist. A certain magnificence of design which underlies the painting suggests to us, however, that Leonardo probably made a cartoon from which they were both derived,—as in the case of the *Madonna with St. Anna*. The beautiful hands of the Madonna, the exquisite drawing of her sleeves, and the lines of the mantle over her head, so much like the *Mona Lisa*, are also substantial indications. The long nose and pointed chin of Leonardo's women were largely imitated by Luini, but the ease and elegance of his drapery could not be imitated. The head of Joseph is particularly Leonardesque; a lean, long cranium with features to match; wrinkled, experienced, and intelligent. Even more so is his right hand with its awkwardly contorted fingers. There is no other Holy Family in which the Christ-child shows such an affection for the infant John. He holds him by the chin with one hand, while the delighted young saint seeks to clasp him about the neck. The attitudes of both are full of grace and animation; but the Christ-child shows his superiority by a quieter, more dignified manner; while the Madonna looks down on them

with a pleased motherly expression. It is in her face that we chiefly feel the difference between the design of Leonardo and the finish of Luini. The pose of her head is slightly formal and preraphaelite.

There are a number of other paintings by Luini which bear evidence of Leonardo's assistance, especially *La Vierge aux Rocher*, of which there are several replicas, but all in a less measure and to a degree rather difficult to determine. Luini was one of the most charming colorists of his time, but his drawing lacks the animation of his master, and his paintings make the impression of tone and temperament rather than of intellectual vigor.

In the Ambrosian gallery at Milan there is the portrait of a man with light hair covered by a red cap and dressed in black, which may safely be attributed to Leonardo's own hand. From his dress we presume him to have been an artist. It is a masterpiece of fine expression, delicate modelling, and microscopic finish. Leonardo painted his shadows one over the other, fusing them together as he did so; a method which requires much more pains than the commoner system of using an opaque dead color, which can be modified but will not fuse with other tints.

La Belle Ferronière in the Louvre is supposed to be the portrait of a favorite of Ludovico Sforza, named Lucrezia Crivelli and mentioned by Vasari. Whether she was so or not, it is an undoubted portrait by Leonardo and highly interesting, though without that peculiar charm which has transferred the *Mona Lisa* into the region of ideal art.

THE MADONNA AND ST. ANNA.

The devotion of the Florentines to art was like patriotism. They felt that the advancement of painting and sculpture was part of the fortune of their city. When Leonardo returned to Florence in or about the year 1500, he found Filippino Lippi had been commissioned to paint a *Holy Family* for the Church of the Annunciation. He expressed a desire to do some such work himself; and when Filippino heard of this, he immediately withdrew in Leonardo's favor, and obtained as much commendation by doing so as he might have for his finished picture. All Florence urged Leonardo to undertake it, and waited with great expectation for nearly a year, when he indeed produced a cartoon that filled the measure of their admiration. More than this they could not persuade him to do; and the picture which hangs in the Louvre was afterward completed by his pupils, and whether he painted any portion of it would be difficult to determine. The coloring is hard, and the drawing somewhat rigid so that it looks rather like the copy of a bronze statue than a study from real life. Its technical inferiority to the *Mona Lisa* is very decided.

Two studies in red chalk of the heads of St. Anna and the Holy Virgin still indicate what this cartoon must have been. Grandeur in Italian painting dates from the *Last Supper* at Milan, but comparatively few Florentine citizens had seen that. In Florence, therefore, it was this group which created the revolution in painting. Here again Leonardo broke through all conventional restraint. He was led to

introduce a *genre* incident in his historical subject, and thereby improved its poetic quality. It was like the introduction of *reason* by Abelard in the University of Paris. The subject becomes more sacred by being made more natural. He represented the infant Jesus playing with a lamb, while his mother bends over him, smiling with infinite tenderness. The dignified grandmother rises behind her, sharing gravely in her daughter's joy. The Madonna is seated crosswise, and the freedom of attitude (which does not remind you of Michel Angelo) gives additional strength to the composition.

There is a lack of simplicity, an overwrought appearance in the finished painting, which the two red studies of the heads of St. Anna and the Madonna do not suffer from. These may indeed be called perfect, if perfection be possible. St. Anna would seem to have been taken from the same model as the Madonna in the Church of St. Onofrio thirty years earlier, though her features are more regular. She is the ideal grandmother: prudent, circumspect, kindly, and contented, though all the joys of life are passed for her. How much grace there is, mingled with the dignified pose of her head. Her large drooping eyelids are the mask of a rare intelligence.

The drawing of the Madonna is not only more beautiful than the finished picture, but it makes her appear nearly ten years younger. Her features too are more refined. She is smiling, as only a young mother can smile; and her eyes have that appearance of fulness which is caused by strong affection. Her head-dress is inimitable, and her face is thrown

into relief by the shadow of her veil which floats off with exquisite grace. She is the very expression of maternal love; but it is love without weakness. Her lips meet as lightly as rose petals; but their drawing indicates character, and all her features suggest firmness.

THE BATTLE OF THE STANDARD.

In regard to the competition between Leonardo and Michel Angelo there are several points to be considered. Michel Angelo was thirty years old at the time but had not yet proved his superiority as a painter. Leonardo was more than fifty and had lately finished a painting at Milan over which all Italy was in a glow of admiration. He was also an excellent colorist, while Michel Angelo's coloring was never highly esteemed. Then the subject he selected was more dignified, and more likely to arouse popular enthusiasm. It is doubtful, however, even at this time if Leonardo was considered Michel Angelo's superior, and Soderini and his council clearly made a mistake in deciding against the latter; for if they had given the work to Michel Angelo they would have obtained their painting for the city hall; whereas Leonardo, according to his usual custom, experimented on the surface of the wall with some kind of a liquid which caused the paint to sink into the plaster, and after finishing a portion of it he became dissatisfied with his work and abandoned it altogether. In consequence of this failure he never succeeded in obtaining another important commission in Italy.

The cartoon by itself was of inestimable value: but there came a realistic age in Italy, like the present one in America, when ideal work was no longer appreciated. Its disappearance I believe has never been accounted for; but it was still in existence when Rubens came on his pious pilgrimage to the Sistine Chapel a hundred years later. Rubens' sketch is the most spirited reproduction we now have of it, and therefore perhaps the best; though the drawing in the Dresden collection attributed to Raphael probably comes nearer to the literal truth. Rubens' florid personality appears in his work; even where with profound respect he copied the drawing of Michel Angelo,—thus producing a highly flavored and not very pleasant mixture of the two styles. In his study of the battle scene we do not notice the style of Leonardo so much as the vigor of his design.

War is the acme of human concentration; and Leonardo has alone succeeded in giving the effect of this. Four horsemen have rushed together and are struggling in a confused group of arms and legs and bodies. One of them has seized the standard with both hands, while another is struggling desperately to tear the staff away from him. Two more have lifted their scimetars for a decisive blow. Between the legs of the horses a soldier is lying apparently wounded, and another is stretched across his body threatening his life with upraised arm, quite unconscious of his own peril; while a third, leaning on his elbow, lifts a heavy shield to protect himself from the impending hoofs. The faces of the combatants are distorted with such rage as excludes all sense of

fear or humanity. The horses also partake of the fury of their riders. Two of them have locked their forelegs together, and are tearing at each other with their teeth ; but the expression of their eyes is the one bright glimpse of intelligence in the whole scene. Leonardo's liking for grotesque forms appears on the armor of the standard-bearer, whose helmet is wrought into the likeness of a huge corrugated conch-shell, with similar ornaments for his shoulders, and the skull and horns of a ram to decorate his breastplate. His face is in keeping with the rest. The action of the horses is most vigorous, and nowhere overdrawn. The picture is as perfect as the *Venus of Milo* or Titian's *Death of Peter Martyr*.

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST.

We now come to the last of Leonardo's paintings, and in some respects the most characteristic of them. In the room adjoining the great hall of the Louvre, to which all the choicest small pictures are consigned, his *John the Evangelist* reigns supreme among Titians and Raphaels. Of all his designs it is the most mysterious, and unites with this the caprice which we have noticed in his own character. It is also his finest study in light and shade. The figure is nude, but mostly in such deep shadow that only the face, right shoulder, and arm are distinctly visible. These are illuminated as if by a spiritual radiance. We may suppose that the coloring originally was what the *Mona Lisa* is described to have been, but, faded as it now is, we can yet say fairly that no other

painting gives the texture of flesh as this does. Its tenderness is exceptional.

The features of the Evangelist, though large and impressive, are so delicately moulded that his face might easily be mistaken at first sight for that of a woman. He is smiling in a religious rhapsody; but there is also something weird and elfin-like in his expression. We take him to be a person from another world; yet there is no mistaking the heavenly indication of his forefinger. It is an expression of immortality,—as if to say, “Only there above does life begin.” If all other paintings by Leonardo were destroyed and this hand only remained, we should know still that he was an artist without superior. The most beautiful feet are to be found on Tintoretto’s *Ariadne*, but even the *Mona Lisa* has not such a hand as this. After you have compared it with the hands in *La Belle Jardinière*, or those of Correggio’s *Antiope*, or those in Paul’s *Wedding Feast at Cana*, or with any others in the whole gallery, you will begin to appreciate the art of Leonardo. The eyes are not less remarkable. You can look into them as you would look into clear water, and at the same time they seem to be looking into yours. Their expression is ingenuous and yet inscrutable.

In one of the last paragraphs in his treatise on painting, Leonardo says of the young painter who is severely critical of himself: “He will produce few works, but they will be such as to fix the admiration of every beholder.” This is not generally true, but it is certainly true of the master himself.

It is pleasant to have one's opinion confirmed across the gulf of time by a good authority. I have always believed that Leonardo's drawings were the finest ever made, and I find that Vasari says the same of them. What Michel Angelo desired to express by outline, Leonardo affected by skilful shading; and he is now considered the true artist who is best able to do this. In *St. John the Evangelist* there are no outlines at all, yet the sense of form that it gives is complete in itself. Leonardo thus became the precursor of Correggio, Murillo, and Rembrandt. Neither was he wanting in correctness of delineation. He is more true to life than Raphael, and drew with a finer grace. We have the testimony of his contemporaries that his cartoon of the *Battle of the Standard* could not be excelled for vigorous and truthful outlines. Some of his studies, like his sketch for the *Last Supper*, were hastily and roughly made; but the greater number of them were finished with extreme care and delicacy. The two heads of *St. Anna and the Virgin*, already described, are among the finest of them.

Of *Mona Lisa Giacondo* he made drawings from various points of view, as if to discover what was the best position in which to paint her portrait. There is a profile study of her, exquisitely finished, in the passage-way which leads from the Pitti Palace to the Uffizi, and few people pass through there without taking notice of it. It has a calm, sphinx-like repose that is very impressive.

There is a small study of a youthful head about two inches square, with luxuriant hair, and a face

handsomer and more intelligent than any Apollo. Another with a wreath of leaves about the brow, less carefully finished, would seem to have been suggested by the Apollo Belvedere.

He drew the head of a warrior, a homely, hardened, stoical, and storm-beaten face, like one of Wallenstein's troopers, wearing a helmet of ingenious conformation ornamented with griffins' wings; which carries out the idea of truculency expressed in his visage. This was probably one of his studies for the *Battle of the Standard*.

He also drew gentle, pious, and amiable faces: one of a lady with drooping curls, and an air of comfortable resignation; and another with head inclined, and almost too modest to raise her gentle eyelids, but with such beautiful hair, wavy, rippling, twining about her ears, and falling upon her neck in playful luxuriance.

The noblest of them is the head of a woman, whose face is nearly in profile. It is not a beautiful face though her features are regular; but something better. It is a face which shows firmness and solidity of character, and is at the same time, kind, womanly, and pre-eminently religious. We do not know whether this is an ideal, or a study from life. If there was such a woman, and Leonardo had painted her portrait, it would have been equal to the best. However, it is the artist more often than his subject who gives tone and character to the portrait.

There are also some strange and curious heads; especially one of an old man with little if any hair, and a look of tremendous energy in his face. Leo-

nardo says somewhere that the imagination of the painter ought to see faces in the holes of fences, and one would suppose that quite a number of Leonardo's studies had originated in that manner.

Most mysterious is the drawing of a mantle, or some large piece of cloth, thrown over—what? After looking at it for some time we recognize a pair of boots behind the cloth. Whether there is also a man in the boots we cannot tell; and so it remains. All later artists might have taken lessons from this piece of drapery.

Continual improvements are being made in photography, but a camera will never paint a portrait, nor represent a building correctly. Certain pictures, like Tintoretto's *Three Graces* and Raphael's *Madonna of the Fish*, it imitates in a more satisfactory manner, but drawings on a flat surface can be photographed with perfect accuracy. It may be counted one of the advantages of our time that Braun of Dornach has supplied us with copies of Leonardo's drawings which cannot be distinguished from the originals, except by the paper on which they are printed; and these treasures, intrinsically more valuable than the finest engravings, have come within the reach of persons who are not able to cross the Atlantic and have never entered the Pitti Palace.

Those who look at Leonardo's own portrait and are susceptible to delicate impressions, may notice the appearance of extreme sensitiveness in his face. In spite of his grand physique, this man looks as if the touch of a feather would cause him pain. We remember the story, also, of Michel Angelo who

felt a stone bridge shaking under his horse's feet ; and not long afterward its arches fell into the Tiber. He could feel through the hoofs of his horse what others would scarcely have noticed with their own feet. It was only with the help of such sensitive nerves that these great artists could create their illusions on canvas and in marble. They united the strength of gladiators with the tenderness of a young child.

What Leonardo surpassed all other artists in since time began, was *vitality*. No one else has come so near the imitation of life itself ; and this may account for the length of time which he worked over his pictures.

We wonder what became of Leonardo's mother, and if she had her share also in the prosperity and honor of her marvellous child.

THE WORKS OF MICHEL ANGELO

AMONG the Aryan races there have been six men who are rightly supposed to tower above all others—Homer, Cæsar, Michel Angelo, Shakspeare, Goethe, and Napoleon. There is one for the Greek, and one for the Roman, one for modern Italy, and one for England, France, and Germany. Beethoven might perhaps be added as a seventh ; but the indeterminate character of musical sounds has hardly an equal value with the definite statements of language, the clearness of artistic forms, or the important results of practical action. Beethoven, besides, would seem to have been lacking in dignity of character, and no one, however wonderful his genius may be, can attain the highest place in the opinions of men without that requisite. These six, then, stand before all others, and are equalled only by one another, each in his own way. Dante may approach Homer, Frederick Napoleon, and Tintoret Michel Angelo ; but it does not require a critical estimate of their abilities to decide between them.

The fact that Michel Angelo was nursed by the wife of a stone-cutter would indicate that the Buonarrotti family belonged to the landed gentry of Tus-

cany, approaching the nobility in social position ; for then, as now, it was only among aristocratic families that wet nurses were obtained for children ; and it has often been surmised that he acquired in this way his predilection for sculpture rather than painting. He also drank in an excellent constitution, which, joined with his thickset frame and constant exercise with hammer and chisel, made him one of the strongest men of that vigorous age. Mental force, if rightly applied, will always increase corporeal power ; and it was thus that Cæsar, Michel Angelo, and Napoleon were able to extend the limits of physical endurance. The terrible energy with which the old sculptor attacked his marble bore witness to the cumulative temperance and industry of his youth. His sturdy figure, though not graceful, was symmetrical, and gave an impression of character, even at a distance.

If we place a head of Napoleon beside portraits of Wellington, Washington, Blucher, Moreau, and other great leaders of his time, even a boy will perceive at once that he is superior to all of them ; so the head of Michel Angelo surpasses in distinction all the other great artists of Italy, and we recognize him as an exceptional man, even by the contour of his head. Like his features, it was strong and massive, and yet refined as the head of an Apollo. The Italians still delight to carve it on gems and cameos. His eyes were remarkably large, dark, and lustrous ; but full of tenderness and commiseration. They tell us of long suffering, unrequited affection, and patient endurance.



MADONNA WITH TWO ATTENDANT ANGELS
BY MICHELANGELO
National Gallery

He possessed all those qualities which are called virtues, and, in addition, was reserved, taciturn, and even haughty. All great artists have to be sincere ; for sincerity is the essence of art : but Michel Angelo gave forth his sincerity like an old Hebrew prophet, without regard to the temporary mischief it might occasion either to himself or others. His correcting the drawing of his excellent master, Ghirlandajo, was neither considerate nor in good manners ; but it was done in the interest of truth, and there was something wholesome in this, which inclined his contemporaries to approve of it. He was fortunate to live in an age when intellectual veracity was more respected than it is in Italy at present.

He was much more like Dante than Shakspeare : not so inexorable as Dante, but the tragical side of life made so deep and abiding an impression on him as to overcloud the joyous and comic side. Of merriment and jests he knew nothing ; he never jested himself, nor more than to smile slightly at the jests of others. He had no pleasures outside of his work ; nor was he ever acquainted with love, courtship, and marriage. The only friend who was really dear to him appears to have been the Countess Colonna. Perhaps the fervid exhortations of Savonarola may have been impressed too powerfully on his youthful imagination ; and he must have been saddened by the premature death of Lorenzo dei Medici, who had been more than a counsellor and guide to him. The loss of Lorenzo, who was presumably poisoned, produced a confusion in Italian politics like the assassination of Garfield in America,

which they never wholly recovered from. Michel Angelo's patriotism was deeply affected by the misfortunes of his country; and even greater was his commiseration for the sufferings of humanity, which are common to all ages, and for which there seems to be no avail.

We miss in his works a representation of the bright side of life; and yet their effect upon us is neither gloomy nor depressing. We find rest in the strength of his mighty creations, and we follow him with such confidence as we would an experienced and untiring Alpine guide. The power of his drawing invigorates us, and his elevated conceptions lift us to a higher plane, where we feel exhilarated as if by mountain air. We return to them with satisfaction after we have had enough of the summer glory of Correggio and the brilliant pageantry of Paul of Verona.

How was it then that this man came to surpass all others?

All the deepest minds have perceived that behind character and beyond intellect there was a self-sustaining, inscrutable something which determined their destiny in life.* It is like the invisible germ in the egg which decides color, form, and other attributes of the bird that is to be. It cannot be described any more than it is possible to define love or beauty. We can, however, approach it respectfully by taking observations of human nature from different points, as in a geometrical survey; and in

* This fact is certainly not *explained* by the word *soul*, which, as commonly used, merely indicates faith in a spiritual existence.

this way we also realize more clearly the character of the individual.

In the first place then, such a man must be wholly free from weakness. He must be without a flaw either mentally or physically. The driving-wheel of a locomotive is equal and of equal strength at every point of its rim ; but men are not made like that. We find out very early that there are soft places in us which will not bear any strain, and that there are many things which we must avoid attempting in consequence. A young scholar can perhaps talk very fluently on the subject of his studies, but when he rises to make a speech (he finds the total personality of his audience a pressure upon him which he has not the force to resist.) Hawthorne possessed a fine genius, but he never was able to understand politics, although he was too liberal not to desire to do so. The accomplishment of a really great work requires the exertion of every faculty in turn ; and if a man has a weak place anywhere it will continually come to the surface, and his efficiency is always impaired at that point. If we compare Cæsar with other great Romans it will be noticed that he was the only complete one, who never was obliged to depend on the advice or assistance of others. He could make his own speeches, draught his own laws, and manage the finances of his army. Leonardo da Vinci might have been the rival of Michel Angelo but for his capricious nature and desultory methods of working.

Next we come to single-mindedness ; which is really the quintessence of sincerity. In a large

school there will perhaps be ten boys who are good scholars. Among these, three may be spurred by a spirit of emulation ; three more from an ambition to succeed in whatever they do ; three learn their lessons because they are praised for it ; while only one studies from pure love of knowledge and self-improvement. In the end this last will surpass all the rest ; for after a time the others will become tired of praise and success, but he will always continue to learn and to improve so long as he remains true to himself. His work will always be a pleasure to him, and for that reason also he will succeed the better in it. This is the true artist spirit, and when we apply the principle to such work as requires mental ingenuity or skill of hand, instead of mere mechanical study, the disproportion between it and all other forms of activity is increased tenfold. While the ambitious artist stops to congratulate himself on what he has done, the single-minded artist goes onward and leaves the other behind. But one boy in two hundred of this sort is a large average, and human nature is so misunderstood that he will usually be considered the most ambitious of them all.

It is possible, however, for single-minded persons to be also very narrow, and thus their lives become sterile in spite of their purity. There can be no great accomplishment without greatness of design ; and how is this attained except by a long-continued process of mental selection between such things as are important and elevated and those which are small, trivial, and mean ; a constant winnowing of

wheat from the chaff ; a perpetual sublimation and classification of ideas.

“ Noble souls alone can know
How the giants live and grow.”

Greatness of design in Cæsar and Napoleon may be readily mistaken for personal ambition, but this could not possibly happen with regard to Michel Angelo's drawing. He had the grand manner such as Homer and Shakspeare had ; but, unlike Homer and Shakspeare, he never descended from it. It is visible in his earliest and in his latest work. It becomes strikingly evident by comparison with even such artists as Titian and Raphael ; but in and of itself it is plain enough to those who are accustomed to converting ideas into form.

What can the last element in our alembic be except heroism ? How shall we define it unless as man rising superior to his physical conditions ? It is only with the help of this that we can surmount the most difficult obstacles and achieve results of the highest kind. It despises death ; it is superior to stoicism, courage, fortitude, and determination. A man who would discover a new continent, lead a social revolution, or translate the Vedas, carries his life in his hands. The danger of the hero-artist or poet is not so apparent as that of the soldier or statesman, but it is none the less real. When Michel Angelo undertook to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel he knew not how it might end, for such a work had never been attempted before. It is said that for a

long time afterward he could not read a book or letter except by holding it above his head.

The heroism of performance is superior to the heroism of endurance. By constantly rising above physical conditions the hero ascends one summit after another until those who behold him become dizzy with apprehension. He thus elevates himself at last above humanity; becomes sublime; and if his mission is to stem the tide of religious bigotry he may perhaps be worshipped as a god.

Genius is a composite attribute, and differs widely with different men. The genius of Michel Angelo was composed of strength, single-mindedness, greatness of design, and heroism, with the addition of that unfathomable inclination which led him into the walks of sculpture and painting.

He was a pitiless critic for the mistakes of other artists, giving his opinion of them apparently without considering whether they wished to hear it. In this way he brought on the collision with Torrigiano, who told Cellini that he struck Michel Angelo's nose with his fist, but others say, what is more likely, with his mallet. Torrigiano made liberal offers to Cellini to go to the English court with him, but the latter declined them, nor could he endure any further acquaintance with a man who had treated the divine Buonarrotti in such a manner. I believe no Frenchman, Englishman, or German has been so venerated by his countrymen as Michel Angelo was even while he still lived.

All traces of Michel Angelo's apprentice work has disappeared like the snow image which he made for

Lorenzo dei Medici in the Boboli gardens; and considering the temperament of the man it is more than likely that he destroyed his early studies himself, although his genius manifested itself in a decided manner from the very beginning. The first years of his manhood were not prolific in their accomplishment. Previous to the opening of the sixteenth century, his first really great work was the *Pieta* in St. Peter's at Rome; and before that he had carved a square bas-relief of struggling figures, a youthful *St. John*, a *Bacchus*, two round reliefs representing the Holy Family, and the *Cupid* at Kensington. We follow the evolution of that quality in his youthful efforts which gives genius its special character with absorbing interest.

The square relief referred to is now in the *Casa Buonarotti* at Florence, and is so enigmatical as to defy all analysis. Michel Angelo's contemporaries speak of it as the conflict of heroes and centaurs; but there is no trace of a centaur in it, except what appears to be the unfinished termination of a horse. A dozen or fifteen youths are struggling together in every variety of graceful attitude, their limbs so entangled as to give the effect of a human arabesque. A youth raised above his fellows (evidently supported in their arms), forms the central figure; and on his right, two young women are apparently being carried off in the same manner. In the left-hand corner an older man appears holding a large stone in his hands, and beneath him another is seated in a grievous attitude apparently suffering from a blow on his head. The

youth in the centre has his arm raised as if to strike some one. It reminds us of the Greek reliefs representing the conflict over the invulnerable Capaneus; but here man struggles against man, and all is confusion.

Michel Angelo never explained himself, and the enigmatical element in him seems to have formed the key-note of his life. The problems he places before us are all the more puzzling because unintentional. It requires study to make out the action of this relief; but who can ever tell the meaning of it? It is this mystery which constitutes his greatest charm to the minds of his admirers; but the relief has also an artistic charm of the highest order from the harmonious disposition of the several figures; and their vigorous and elastic modelling, combined with such freedom of attitude as Italian art never had seen before. It was indeed a small revolution in Florentine relief work such as would have astonished Ghiberti, and probably did astonish Donatello. Although powerfully vitalized the action is nowhere extravagant, and to judge from the half-defined expression of their faces, the combatants engaged are taking their hard knocks with as much equanimity as if they were occupied with athletic amusements. It is doubtful if Michel Angelo intended to give the relief a high degree of finish. He had developed his idea in it, and did not care to go farther in that direction. It seems as if he wished to show how much more he could include in the same space than the Greeks did in the reliefs on their temples,—which this relief resembles in form. The manner

in which the various figures are superimposed indicates already a high degree of technical skill.

Whether the statue of a youthful *Saint John*, which Michel Angelo made for the younger Lorenzo dei Medici in 1495, is the same as the statue discovered at Pisa in 1874, still remains in doubt. Grimm and other German critics have opposed the probability of this on the ground that the motive was not sufficiently original, and for other technical reasons. The question is whether Michel Angelo, whose tendency was always toward a grandiose physical development, would have been likely to have designed so slender a figure. The expression of the face also is weak even to the lackadaisical; whereas Michel Angelo is always strong. The attitude and features, especially the upward pointing brow and obtuse angle of the nose, remind me of the *Saint George* of Donatello, although the *Saint George* is rigid with moral energy, and this *Saint John* suffers from the opposite extreme. Still it is a beautiful statue in its way, full of graceful flowing lines, such as Michel Angelo might have chiselled at twenty-two under Donatello's influence. It is original enough as a design of John the Baptist, and it is possible that Michel Angelo designed to represent a tender, effeminate youth, who nevertheless contained within himself the germ of an heroic nature.* The face is a reflective one; and to the boy who thinks, the future unfolds distinction.

The *Bacchus* in the Bargello at Florence is not so

* This statue is now in the Berlin museum.

purely Greek as Condivi supposed, and yet it contains Hellenic elements, which may have been derived by studying the subject from Greek models. There is a slight stiffness in the attitude which reminds us among other resemblances of the Cassell *Apollo*, a rather archaic work of the fifth century B.C. The feet are almost an imitation of the Cassell statue; while the heaviness of the thighs, the modeling of the right arm, nose, mouth, and decoration of the hair also resemble it. There is an expression of levity in the face, especially in the slightly parted lips, which is very like that of the *Apollo*; yet the statue is strongly original and Michelangesque. His attitude is at once nonchalant, easy, and dignified; the face sensual, but serene and intelligent. The manner in which he holds a cup in his right hand on a level with his mouth, and the tiger skin in his left, is charming. Also, observe the pose of his head, the grace of the collar-bones, and the beauty of the left hand, which alone would designate it as a work of genius. We notice here in contrast with the Cassell *Apollo* the absence of well-defined gluteous muscles—which unite the hips to the abdomen—so prominent in all Greek statues.

The *Cupid* in the Kensington museum is the earliest work by Michel Angelo which really shows the fulness of his genius. He made a sleeping Cupid somewhere between 1493 and 1495, which we hear of from Condivi, but of which no trace has since been discovered. His conception of the subject four years later was not unlike that of the time of Praxi-

tiles; not an exuberant *amoretto* eight years old, but a well grown youth of sixteen. The attitude is original and surprising. Cupid kneels down to draw his arrow to the head, by an upward motion of the arm, and while his glance is directed to the head of the arrow he is evidently reflecting on the direction in which he shall discharge it; and in this way the covert nature of the boy-god is cleverly indicated. The modelling is Greek, with a slight admixture of mediæval individuality. This appears especially in the position of the left leg, which is folded closely together in a favorite attitude of Michel Angelo's, such as no Greek sculptor would have thought of for a moment. The raised arm drawing the bow-string is a most beautiful piece of modelling and the whole figure is full of grace, strength, and elasticity. If we compare it with the *Eros* of Praxitiles we find the figure more robust, the face more intelligent, but the attitude by no means so decorous; nor is the hair treated with equal delicacy and consideration; but the *Eros* at Naples is a copy, and Michel Angelo's *Cupid* an original. In this instance, in the square relief of the *Casa Buonarotti*, and in his *David*, Michel Angelo represented hair in the mass, only dividing the terminal locks so as to form a fringe about the head, and slightly indicating the separate strands. It was only late in life that he succeeded in sculpturing hair equal to the finest Greek work.

In the Bargello there is a round unfinished relief of a *Madonna and Child* by Michel Angelo, which

seems related to the Bruges *Madonna* both in motive and treatment. According to Michel Angelo's method of liberating his statues from the marble, by cutting in successive planes, it is possible that he may have given up this work, like so many others, before the final cutting was made; or it may have occurred to him that the rough condition of the intermediate spaces would serve as an excellent background to display the smooth limbs and clear-cut drapery of his figures. The perfect realism of their attitudes is supplemented by a rhythmic grace of outline; and those who only know Michel Angelo's art from the *David*, the *Moses*, and his great frescos, should study these earlier and less ambitious designs in order to realize the wide range of his sympathies. The relief is modern in conception but Hellenic in execution.

PAINTING.

Michel Angelo made some attempts in the use of color at this time, but not altogether with satisfactory results. Of his surviving efforts the *Entombment* in the National Gallery may perhaps have preceded the *Doni Holy Family*. It was pronounced a Michel Angelo by Cornelius, and a glance at it is sufficient to confirm this opinion. If it is a failure—and we may suppose that Michel Angelo thought so himself and consequently left it unfinished—it is nevertheless a most impressive study. The manner in which Christ's hair is painted connects it closely with the *Holy Family* painted for Angelo Doni, and



STATUE OF DAVID BY MICHELANGELO

the stalwart figure of Nicodemus is a forethought of the Sistine Chapel.

The body of Christ is being carried over a flight of steps by Nicodemus, Mary Magdalen, and Joseph of Arimathea. His posture is an awkward one, but there is great beauty and truthfulness to nature in his form, especially the lower limbs. A strange fact noticed by Grimm in Raphael's *Entombment*, is that the face evidently shows that Christ is not dead but only in a trance. The figure of Nicodemus is magnificent, and is the first indication of that grandeur of design in which Michel Angelo has never been equalled. The body of Christ is supported on a stout scarf, the ends of which are held by Nicodemus and Mary Magdalen; and the manner in which the former grasps this with his left hand is a masterly piece of painting. So also the foreshortening of his right leg—the pose of the head, throat, and shoulders; all wonderful. Mary Magdalen is bent backward like a bow with her exertion, and her figure is still unfinished. Another Mary is seated in the left corner, remarkable for her fine drapery, but her motive remains undecided. The mother of Christ turns her head aside and holds forth her hands in anguish. Her unfinished face is nevertheless expressive of great suffering. Joseph, though slightly sketched, has a finely developed head and noble countenance. Mr. Symonds doubts the authenticity of the picture and finds it discordant and feelingless, but there is really a spiritual tenderness expressed in it of the highest order, though rather imperfectly. The sidelong glance of Nicodemus

might easily be mistaken for a suspicious look, but it is true to the conditions of the situation. As a composition the painting is academic.*

Michel Angelo never learned the mystery of *chiaroscuro*; and, though it seems as if he might have painted a landscape background with sufficient facility, the *Deluge* in the *Sistine* was his only attempt. Without one or the other of these it is impossible to give depth or distance to a painting, and his pictures have therefore the appearance of figures relieved against a wall or flat surface;—that is, his pictures resemble bas-relief work, although full of life, and delineated with a softness and delicacy which no sculpture can equal. Although he never studied the art to its full extent he is really greater as a painter than as a sculptor, and expressed himself more fully with the brush than with the chisel. With his wonderful facility for overcoming obstacles we may believe that he would have rivalled the *chiaroscuro* of Coreggio if he had only attempted to do so.

Though Michel Angelo sometimes submitted to conventionality we more frequently find him leading a crusade against it. In the *Holy Family* painted for Angelo Doni he has avenged a long course of pictorial injustice toward the much slighted Joseph. He has made him appear the most important personage in the group; a rather anxious-looking man,

* Not only do I feel assured that this painting is by Michel Angelo, but that Raphael studied it for his picture of the *Entombment*, or at least designed that under its influence.

but with a strong face, keenly penetrating eye, and finely shaped head. The Madonna, on the contrary, is plebeian, and her chief beauty consists in the upward look of her large Florentine eyes, and her finely modelled arm, strongly developed and yet feminine. The Christ-child is being transferred from the arms of Joseph to his mother's shoulder,—a motive which does not lack originality,—but his face is not impressive and his dark hair painted in twisted sculpture-like tufts does not harmonize well. The coloring is cold and hard; the general effect unprepossessing. In lieu of a background Michel Angelo has introduced a row of nude antique figures, after the fashion of Signorelli, as may be seen in one of his paintings in the Uffizi Gallery. It is the least interesting of Michel Angelo's works; and yet it has a profound meaning for those who can understand it.

The *Madonna* in the National Gallery with two attendant angels * is so perfect in shading and drapery that we should suppose it to have been painted during or after Michel Angelo's work in the Sistine Chapel, but in general conception it claims a close affinity with the marble *Madonna* at Bruges, which was produced between 1502 and 1504. It lacks the maturity of his work in the Sistine Chapel, and yet he has nowhere given proof of more perfect drawing, greater delicacy of facial expression, or a more admirable treatment of drapery.

The face of the Virgin resembles the Bruges

* Painted like the preceding in dry *tempera*.

Madonna, but her expression is less severe. She seems like a twin sister to the Nicodemus in the *Entombment*, and is looking down on her child with half-shut eyes and a slightly Leonardesque smile. There is no look of maternal tenderness in her face, for Michel Angelo never painted such. One would suppose that he had never known the sweetness of domestic life, even in his father's family. The more we gaze at her, however, the more we are attracted by the grave dignity of her countenance, which is slightly sculpturesque but with a reserved depth of feeling. The superb ease of her attitude, and the infallible folds of her drapery are beyond the domain of criticism. The same may be predicated of the infant Christ and Saint John, of whom the latter is much the more interesting on account of his position in full face, by which we can see the soulful expression of his eyes; also from the exquisite manner in which his fur garment is wrapped about one of the loveliest of childlike forms. The Christ-child is not inferior in design but his face is in profile, and he looks upward to the book which his mother appears to have been instructing him in.

The two angels on the Madonna's left are characteristic of Michel Angelo, so much so that it has been doubted whether they were intended for angels or genii; but Michel Angelo evidently believed that the angelic nature could be indicated without the aid of wings, and here he has succeeded.* He afterwards painted angels in his *Last Judgment*, but

* The only creation I know of to which Michel Angelo supplied wings was a demon in the *Last Judgment*.

not with the same delicacy and grace. The manner in which one rests his arm on the shoulder of the other is full of loving tenderness, and their faces express a spirituality unmixed with earthly stain. Their limbs are beauty itself, and their drapery is distinguished by a finer quality of stuff than that of the Madonna. Two more figures are outlined with ground color alone, on the Madonna's right, but we can only distinguish a finely cut profile with a handsome arm and leg. There is a kind of anticlimax in the composition, for the angels and the little Baptist are more interesting than the Madonna and Christ-child.

The Three Fates, which hangs in the Tribuna at Florence, is the most perfect of Michel Angelo's early paintings, and the manner in which the figures are relieved on one another gives it almost a *chiaroscuro*. They are three wonderful, weird old women, evidently sisters, and united by a bond which seems more than fate. Their coloring in shades of brown and grey reminds one of dry autumn leaves; not bright colored but such as one sees in Europe. Their faces are parched and wrinkled, but full of keen intelligence.

" Spin, spin, Clotho, spin,
Lachesis, twist, and Atropos, sever."

The eyes of Lachesis are full of prophetic light and her face is the feminine counterpart of Goethe's, —showing again the close relationship which exists between minds of the highest order.

Critics have lately doubted the authenticity of this picture, without explaining, however, how it could have come into existence. It is a work which presupposes a genius of the very first rank; and it could not have been painted by Raphael, Andrea del Sarto, Titian, or any lesser artist. Only Michel Angelo or Leonardo could have drawn those inevitable lines, and, of the two, Michel Angelo is much the more probable. The perfect ease and correctness of their drapery suggests Michel Angelo at once; and the expression of their faces, if not exactly sibylline, is closely akin to it. The Fates are grouped in the most natural manner and without any appearance of design.

THE PIETA AND THE DAVID.

The *Pieta* has something of the plain and unconscious sincerity of Albert Dürer. In the broad dramatic range of Michel Angelo's works this is the most devotional, and it is one of the few subjects which he has taken from the New Testament. It represents the fulness of Christianity. The calm resignation in Christ's face covers, like a veil, the pain and agony which he has undergone. The expression of the Virgin is most affecting; for it is not only in her face, but in her whole attitude, and even in the posture of her hands that we perceive the sorrow which only a mother can feel, and the infinite longing that can never be gratified on earth. Yet it is not a hopeless grief like that of the *Niobe* in the Florentine Gallery, whose face is swollen and made



" CREATION OF LIGHT " BY MICHELANGELO

Sistine Chapel, Rome

heavy with affliction. There is a moral exaltation in the mother of Christ which shows that here we have the true reconciliation between spirit and matter. Her grief is excessive, but it is still subordinate to her faith in God. Thus we discover already Michel Angelo's advance over Greek and Roman art. After Niobe's suffering had worn itself out she was finally comforted by a piece of bread. The mother of Christ will never descend to sackcloth and ashes, but neither will her sorrows cease so long as she lives.

The technical perfection of the statue is illustrated by the fact that criticism of it always takes the form of some complaint against the motive. It is true enough that Christ and his mother appear to be nearly of the same age, and the position in which she holds his body is not a comfortable one. That she is a "strong, stalwart woman" has also been made an objection. Michel Angelo professed to have a reason for the first of these points, but it is quite as likely that the reason occurred to him afterwards—without intending to impugn his sincerity. The idea that the Madonna should be unchangeable, incorruptible in essential quality, and so perpetually youthful is a noble one; but is it necessary for an explanation of this group? We only have to say how young she looks, and the problem is solved. Neither is it necessary to suppose that she should hold her son in the most comfortable position—rather the reverse. Her figure is Michelangelesque but not obtrusively so. Her attitude expresses much, but her face is too grave and stoical to con-

vey the keenest sense of sorrow, and in this respect the statue does not satisfy our ideal. The posture of Christ made a strong impression on the artists of that time, and was imitated by Raphael in his *Entombment*.* It presents a pathetic exhibition of lifeless inertia, but we do not find either in form or feature the suggestion of a divine or transcendent man. The physiognomy is one which is supposed to indicate generosity and self-denial, but further than that we cannot see into it.

Michel Angelo was at work on the *Pieta* during the last year of the fifteenth century, and it is now to be seen in the first chapel on the right as you enter St. Peter's Church. Unfortunately it has been placed on too high a base.

There are some experiences which are written in the book of life with indelible ink. To drive from Naples to Pompeii; to watch the changing colors of the Jungfrau in the evening sun, as its snows change from rose-pink to the ashes of violet, and its glaciers flame and flash with an ethereal fire; or on an April morning to take your first walk through the city of Florence: he who has enjoyed all these may well feel compensated for numerous troubles.

The central portion of Florence is like a mosaic of magnificent pattern. Even the streets have a mosaic pavement, and there is a narrow band of mosaic between the mouldings which surround the windows of the cathedral. One of those windows is a study for a day. The soft brown, box-like church

* Grimm's *Raphael*, pp. 62, 63.

of Orsanmichele, with the statue of Donatello's *St. George* looking fiercely down from its wall; the modest little Baptistery and its famous gates of bronze; the Duomo itself rising high up into the luminous sky; Giotto's matchless Campanile; the Palazzo Vecchio, with its frowning cornice; the graceful arches of the Loggia di Lanzi; the equestrian statue of *Cosmo the Great*, the colossal *Neptune*, Cellini's *Perseus*, and John of Bologna's *Rape of the Sabines*,—such are the principal figures in it. Formerly also, close by the door of the Palazzo Vecchio, stood the colossal *David* of Michel Angelo, the wonder of the world.

Vasari does not trouble us with many dates in the lives of his illustrious artists, but it is well to remember that Michel Angelo was in his nineteenth year when Lorenzo the Magnificent died and America was discovered; that four years later he visited Rome for the first time, and was there again in 1501, when his friends in Florence advised him* that the Gonfalonaria had given notice that a huge block of marble, which had lain in the workshop at Santa Maria del Fiore ever since the death of Lorenzo, was to be made use of for the glory of the city. After the expulsion of the Medici, and the religious frenzy and delirium of Savonarola, the people of Florence very sensibly chose for their chief magis-

*Condivi denies that he went to Florence for this purpose, but nothing could be more certain than that Michel Angelo would be informed of such an opportunity.

trate Piero Soderini, who was a worthy successor of Lorenzo, and might be called the last of the Florentine statesmen. He was not only a judicious patron of art, but a wise administrator, and being supported by Pope Julius, restored for a time peace and prosperity to the distracted little republic.

The block of marble was nearly eighteen feet in length, but had been so much injured by the attempts of Simone da Fiesole to carve something out of it, that doubts were entertained if it could now be used for anything better than a Doric column. It is an illustration of the manner in which great events sometimes come to pass, that it was neither from a desire of Soderini, nor the inspiration of Michel Angelo, that the *David* was chiselled out of it. On the contrary, Michel Angelo concluded that it would serve better for the slender figure of a youth than for one more fully developed. So he made a small model of wax, and proved to the seignory by measurements how the thing could be done. Such is the practical character of true genius. Thus the commission was awarded to him, though the youngest of the competitors.

Mannerism may be accomplished amid any amount of noise and confusion, but great thoughts require the sanctity of silence. It is highly amusing to think of the sort of fortification with which young Buonarotti surrounded his precious block of marble in order to keep out inquisitive people. Even Soderini judiciously abstained from interfering with him; and in a little more than two years this stupendous work—the most difficult of Michel Angelo's

life—was completed. The small model of wax was his only guide; and it is not known certainly that he used the sculptor's points. His eye was infallible, and it seemed impossible for him to make a mistake. Conveying the statue to its destination was found to be a difficult matter, and the manner in which it was done was considered very ingenious even in those ingenious times.

About twenty years ago the *David* was removed from its position in front of the Palazzo Vecchio, and placed within the Academia dei Belle Arti for its better preservation, while a bronze copy was made of it and set on the hill of San Miniato, where it may be seen at almost any distance from the road to Rome and down the valley of the Arno. This copy proves the superiority of marble over bronze as an art material; as one may perceive, also, from the copy of the *Apollo Belvedere* in the gardens of the Tuileries. A work like John of Bologna's *Mercury* could not, of course, be executed in marble.

Vasari refers to the *Dioscuri* on the Quirinal in comparison with the *David*, and though the *Dioscuri* are generally despised by Roman artists as bad copies of the Antonine period, they have nevertheless the most finely proportioned figures of any male statues in Rome, and were evidently copied from models of the time of Phidias, if not by that sculptor's own hand. We agree with Crowe and Cavalcaselle that Vasari's criticism is commonly not far from the mark; and though the *David* and the *Dioscuri* are separated by a wide gulf of technical workmanship, they are closely united by that grandeur and purity of

design which only belongs to the age of Pericles and the age of Julius II. Its immense size makes the youthfulness of *David* all the more conspicuous. The form is not slender nor fragile, but gives a truthful appearance of tenderness and immaturity. We know that his joints are supple and his limbs flexible. Michel Angelo was more realistic than the Greeks, but he atoned for the lack of ideality in form by a superior ideality of expression. The figure is absolutely faultless and the face wears the stamp of heroism. I think its size prevents a general appreciation of the beauty of his head. His luxuriant hair falls over his temples like a wreath. The features are strong and finely cut, without being sharp or too mature. His eyes are slightly dilated; looking intently. The sling hangs over his left shoulder; the right hand is slightly curled as if the fingers held a small pebble. He is watching Goliath and concentrating himself for the supreme moment of action. His life or death will depend on a single cast of the die. For purity of conception wrought out with an ideal accuracy of detail, the *David* takes its place beside the grandest works of modern art. Michel Angelo's *Night* or his *Moses* may have a more profound significance for us, but they also have peculiarities which interfere with an unreserved admiration. The weight of the statue was found to be full nine tons.

The *Madonna and Child* in the Cathedral at Bruges is closely allied and of similar workmanship to the *Pieta*. The Madonna in both instances appears to

be the very same person, and her head-dress is nearly identical. There is the same long nose, delicate mouth, slightly curved brow, and especially the long, tapering fingers — of Raphael's Dresden *Madonna*. The eyes, however, are different, and the expressions are as different as the artists themselves. It is possible that there may be some relation between the statue and the painting, though the difference in time, full sixteen years, between the execution of the two works would seem to preclude the possibility of their being taken from the same model; if we are to suppose that Michel Angelo made use of a model on this occasion. There are still to be seen in the streets of Rome majestic-looking peasant women, who walk with erect heads and as firm a step as the women of ancient Rome are supposed to have done.

The Bruges group is not religious, as Holbein's and other Madonnas are religious; nor is the motive easy to penetrate. The Madonna holds her boy affectionately by the hand while she thinks of other matters. Her face is beautiful and interesting, but without sentiment. She has a grave, almost austere expression; but her head-dress is a marvel of beauty, more Hellenic than the Greeks; and how so much tenderness of feature and limb as are in the child Jesus could be wrought out of marble will always be a mystery. The dimpled softness of his face is beyond comparison, and I believe we could have another *Moses* and another *David* before another such boy is sculptured. Intellectually he gives the impression of completeness, but of a

nature more human than divine. He is the child of genius.

The competition with Leonardo followed soon after the statue of David had been placed in position. This was a grand idea of Soderini's, but the subject, as already stated, was not chosen to Michel Angelo's advantage. Both of those celebrated cartoons ought to have been painted on the walls of the grand council chamber, for they certainly both deserved it. The solid men of Florence were much to blame for neglecting such a glorious opportunity,—a chance in a thousand years. Lorenzo de' Medici would have supplied the expense from his own purse; but Soderini had not such a good account at the bankers. Michel Angelo selected the bathing-scene, no doubt because it gave him a chance to bring his knowledge of anatomy into play; but groups of half-dressed men are not an altogether pleasant spectacle. So far as art is concerned, people should either have their clothes properly on or properly off. Otherwise the drawing could not be surpassed for truthfulness, purity, strength, and all varied forms of action. The figures of the soldiers are robust and muscular, as they should be, but not too much so, as has often been complained of in Michel Angelo's later work. The ambitious young artists who are reported to have made such devoted study of these two cartoons, with the exception of Benvenuto Cellini, do not appear to have profited much from them.

The election of Julius II. to the Papacy was an

antidote against the poison of the Borgias. He was a sort of sixteenth-century Bismarck; a man of indomitable will, and, though capable of dissimulation, a perfectly sound and healthy character. He was more than a match for Cæsar Borgia, whom he played with as a cat does with a mouse. Cæsar must have discovered this ere long, but found himself unable to escape. Julius foresaw the danger to Italy from the internal consolidation of France and Spain, and wished to provide against it; but life was too short for him. Machiavelli says: "Julius II., who was of a fiery and violent disposition, succeeded in all his enterprises; doubtless, because a prince of such a character was best adapted to the circumstances under which the church was then governed by this pontiff. Witness the first invasion of the territory of Bologna, in the life of John Bentivoglio, which gave great umbrage to the Venetians and the kings of France and Spain; but none of them dared to interfere. He displayed in all his enterprises the same character, and his successes have, in that respect, fully justified him; but perhaps he did not live long enough to experience the inconstancy of fortune."

As a patron of art Julius II. can only be compared with Pericles. The finest and grandest of all works of art were executed under his directions. Men of action, if they are enlightened and possessed of sensibility, have an excellent influence on poets and artists. Their energy stimulates, and their knowledge of the world brings the artist out of his retirement and enlarges his view of life. Julius was a man of grand

ideas, and Michel Angelo could not long escape his notice. He is supposed to have been more influenced by him than by any of his contemporaries. Certain it is that the paintings of the Sistine Chapel are of a more experienced character than those pictures and statues which we have been considering.

Rome is a funeral city. It is in itself the monument of two civilizations, and is now commencing again upon a third. Its three hundred and more churches are full to repletion of the monuments of popes, cardinals, and bishops; and the Appian Way is lined with tombs of the more heroic race who preceded them. The pyramid of Cestius, the Castle of St. Angelo, and the tomb of Cecilia Metella are substantial memorials of the vanity and emptiness of human life. Drive out on the Appian Way, and descend into the tomb of the Scipios; examine by the glimmering light of your guide's candle those plain slabs of marble carved only with the letters of that type whose plainness has made it the most useful to mankind. Is the Coliseum itself or the baths of Caracalla a more impressive sight than this? There is no attempt at ornament; nor is there need of any. The finest sculpture could add nothing to the fame of that noblest of Roman families. Nor would any marble be more enduring than the recollection of their virtues.

Such was pagan Rome. How different is the outward presentation of Christian Rome,—of that Church which began in meekness of spirit and contempt for worldly splendor. During the sixteenth

and seventeenth centuries the coasts of the Mediterranean were ransacked for precious marbles with which to adorn the sepulchres of Italian prelates, and every device of architecture and sculpture resorted to in order to make them attractive to the public eye. We soon become satiated, however, with this meaningless magnificence, and find only too surely that no names are connected with it that we care for, or have ever heard of; unless they be notorious, like the cardinal whom Guido has placed in the image of Satan under the feet of the Archangel.

Protestant Christianity teaches us to live for one another; and this translated into practical politics means that we are to live for the good of the community, and for ourselves as part of the community. This and "every man to his trade," are the two cardinal doctrines of Plato's *Republic*. Antagonistic to them is the theory that every man has a right to do as he pleases so long as he does not interfere with the rights of other people. The former is the principle of national growth, and the latter of national decline; and it was this individualism which was dominant in Italy in the year 1500. Julius II. was an exception to his time. He was sincere, sound at heart, and, in his way, disinterested. He wished for a monument to himself because other popes had them; and he would attend to it in his lifetime, because he knew after he was dead no one would care for him, any more than for a dead ox.

In Michel Angelo he first met with a man of ideas grander than his own, and of a performance that

even exceeded expectation. Amid the thousand and one cases of partial fulfilment, what a satisfaction to discover such an exceptional personage! Between them they designed a monument almost beyond imagination. It was to have contained three tiers of statues,—more than twenty in number, and many of them of heroic size. Such a work would have required at least fifteen years for its completion, and as the Pope's hair was already white, there seemed little chance that it would be finished in his lifetime; but neither of them thought of this.

The first year was consumed by Michel Angelo at Carrara in order to make sure that the blocks of marble were of the right size and without flaw in any part of them. They were transported to Civita Vecchia by sea, and thence to the open space between the Vatican and the Castle of St. Angelo; which has ever since been considered consecrated ground, because Michel Angelo had his studio there.

VICTORY AND THE CAPTIVES.

In the second and third year he designed and partially finished for the mausoleum a *Victory* and four statues of *Captives* over whom the *Victory* was intended to preside. Two of the *Captives* were afterwards completed, and in some mysterious manner found their way to the sculpture gallery of the Louvre; two others were never more than partially blocked out, and are now to be found in a grotto in the Boboli Gardens at Florence. The *Victory* also

finally travelled to Florence, and was placed in the Palazzo Vecchio, where it suffers in a way by its separation from the others. If we did not know by authentic records that it was intended for a *Victory* it is not likely that the fact would ever have been discovered. The lower portion of the block is unfinished, and it is not certain what Michel Angelo proposed to develop out of it. Above this irregular mass of marble, the figure of a youth is kneeling with his head stretched forward and turned over the right shoulder, while his right arm is doubled so that it seems as if he intended to rest his chin upon his hand,—though he does not as yet. No one but Michel Angelo could have imagined such an attitude, and if we are to explain its meaning, how can we do it otherwise than as a representation of the conflicting emotions which crowd upon an heroic nature in the hour of triumph. The features recall Michel Angelo's *David*, and are fully as noble. The far-seeing eye glancing from beneath a contracted brow, and the slight pressure of the lips indicate a nature in which ambitious impulses are happily blended with self-command. The head is crowned with a rich mass of wavy locks treated much after the manner of the *David*; and it is probable that this was the first work which Michel Angelo undertook in the service of Pope Julius. It has a depth of meaning which is almost inscrutable; and it is only those to whom this appeals who can ever appreciate it. Those who love art for its external charm—as in the *Venus de' Medici*—will always be repelled by its peculiar attitude.

The two *Captives*, miscalled *Slaves*, are both creations of the same motive, though differing in attitude; and the hopeless despair expressed in their faces is of such a depth as only Michel Angelo might have conceived. They are not only exceptional for this, but for the softness of their limbs and the absence of all muscularity. Although such modelling would seem to contradict the idea that they were prisoners captured in battle it harmonizes with the pathetic aspect of their faces, as a more vigorous physique could not do so well. They seem rather like spirits of captivity; ideal creations, representative of Pope Julius' success in war.

The *Captive* with the arm raised above his head is not unlike, in pose, expression, and modelling, the *Amazon* in the Vatican commonly attributed to Polykleitus, but more probably the work of Cresilas; but whether this was a coincidence or an unconscious imitation it is no longer possible to determine. There are, however, several duplicates of this *Amazon* in existence, and Michel Angelo may have seen one of them.

This group of statues closes Michel Angelo's first or virginal period, which lasted into his thirty-fourth or thirty-fifth year. Without being in any sense imitative of the Greek, they are more Hellenic than those which came after them. In purity of feeling they are equalled by their perfect execution. They are surpassed only by a few of the best antique statues. To the lover of simple beauty they are more attractive than the grander and more mysterious creations of Michel Angelo's later years.

THE SISTINE CHAPEL.

Thus we perceive already that the materials for the Pope's monument have been scattered to the winds. How did it happen that Julius should have postponed the completion of it after 1507? The explanation that has been given, and which Mr. Tyrwhitt accepted, that it was the result of an intrigue in Raphael's favor, and Bramante's suggestion that it was a bad omen to prepare a tomb in one's lifetime, is not sufficient to account for it. The man who had outwitted Cæsar Borgia was not the sort of a person to be scared by such an idle notion; rather a dangerous man to attempt to lead by the nose. As a lawyer, also, Julius must have known many examples to the contrary. It is more likely that during the interruption of the work by Michel Angelo's *hegira* to Florence the Pope lost his interest in it, and his thoughts became occupied with other projects. It may even have occurred to him that decorating the house of God would be an undertaking more worthy of Michel Angelo's skill, and more creditable to himself than building a mausoleum to his own fame.

There is nothing surprising in the quarrel between these two great men. Michel Angelo also had an indomitable will, and, among other divine qualities, was no respecter of persons. It was only through his perfect independence of conventionality that his drawing could acquire such freedom. When he and Julius were together there were two popes in the room. Michel Angelo, of course, was uncon-

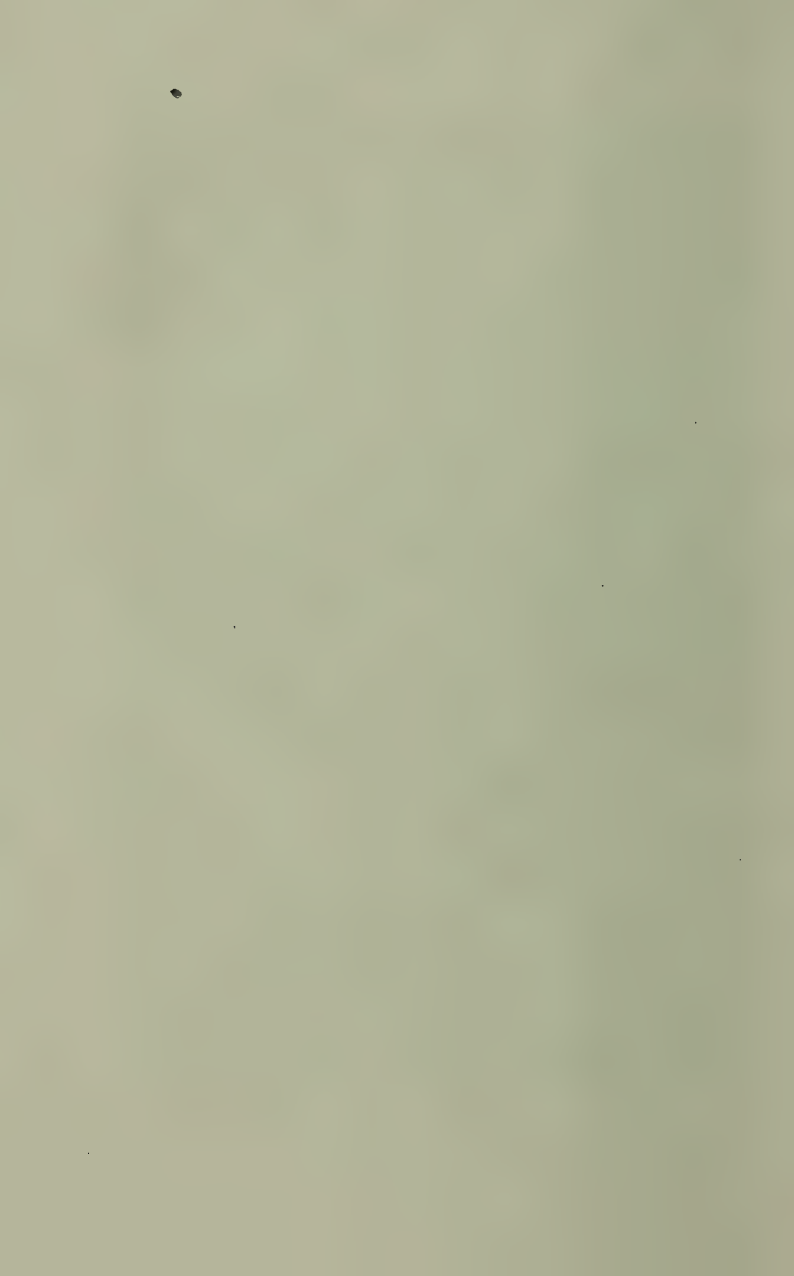
scious of this, but Julius must sometimes have been severely tried by it. The abstracted ways of an artist and thinker also interfered with his successful performance of court etiquette. Michel Angelo himself refers to this absent-mindedness of artists, in a conversation which took place at the house of Vittoria Colonna long afterward.

Michel Angelo, having paid for a cargo of marble from Carrara with his own funds, called on the Pope to obtain a liquidation, but was refused admittance to his Holiness. This occurred three times in succession, when at last Michel Angelo discovered that the guards had received orders not to admit him any more. Such unjust treatment, as he deemed it, produced a strong revulsion of feeling, and he left Rome for Florence that evening. Couriers were sent after him, but with no effect. Neither could Soderini persuade him to return to the Pope's service.

There are two possible explanations for the Pope's action. In the first place, he was on the eve of his expedition to Bologna: the other, that Michel Angelo had offended him at a previous interview, and the Pope employed this method of correcting his behavior. The latter view was the more probable one, and gives this affair the character of a quarrel between lovers. The message which Michel Angelo returned to Julius, that he might seek for some one who would serve him better, carries out this view of it to perfection. What strikes one rather curiously is that Michel Angelo should have applied to the Pope to have his accounts audited, instead of to the



"THE ERYTHRAEAN SIBYL," BY MICHELANGELO
Sistine Chapel, Rome



Treasurer of the Vatican; also that he should have been able to leave Rome, though so well known to the Pope's officers, without special permission.

Everybody was afraid of Julius; even Machiavelli was. Michel Angelo's friends in Florence were anxious as to what might happen to him if he placed himself again in the power of the Pope. Soderini, therefore, commissioned him in the sacred character of an envoy from the Florentine state, and Julius, being now at Bologna, and having succeeded in his enterprise, Michel Angelo went thither to meet him, and a reconciliation was effected, it is said, not without some electrical explosion, such as takes place when there is a sudden change in the elements. The immediate result of it was a bronze statue of the Pope, six cubits in height, which occupied Michel Angelo all of the following year. As already remarked, this statue was destroyed by the Bentivogli soon after it was placed in position, and the Pope's query as to whether Michel Angelo had represented him as blessing or cursing is the only hint we now have of its character.

What shall we say on entering the Sistine Chapel except, "The inexpressible is here accomplished!" On his return to Rome, Michel Angelo wished to continue the work on the mausoleum, especially as he had already begun on the figure of Moses, which was only finished thirty years later, as well as two or three other statues which were never finished at all. Pope Julius, however, would hear nothing of it, and insisted on his painting the ceiling of the

Sistine Chapel. We may thank the Pope for this; for the drudgery of sculpture is so great that four or five pictures of equal merit may be painted while one statue is being carved; and though we have altogether more than two hundred works from Michel Angelo's hand (if the *Last Judgment* be divided into groups), there can hardly be said to be too many of them.

The Sistine Chapel is like a very tall box, without any architectural beauty, or even elegance. The height of the ceiling above the floor is seventy feet, and only a painter of such great force and breadth of drawing could ever have made use of it successfully. Such groups of saints as Perugino drew would have appeared from beneath it like a row of paper dolls. Even such a composition as Raphael's *Fire in the Borgo* would not appear to advantage there. It was needful there should be figures of grand outlines and colored in broad masses to produce a satisfactory effect. Whether the choice of subjects was decided by the Pope or in a conference between him and Michel Angelo is not known; but those wondrous, primeval forms of the world's creation were well suited to their position, as also to the colossal structure of Michel Angelo's mind. They stand against the wall with such power and distinctness, as if determined to make an everlasting impression on the beholder.

It is difficult enough to obtain a satisfactory view of them; and, in fact, they can be better studied now with the help of Braun photographs in a private house than in the city of Rome. Still, in that way

the coloring is lost, and it is also true that the model of a cathedral can never give an impression equal to the building itself. By taking a half-reclining position on the benches in different parts of the chapel the whole series may finally be made out, and appropriated intellectually. Perhaps a quarter of the ceiling may be studied in a morning. At first it seems like a wild fantasy of flying figures, but gradually the literal meaning of the different scenes dawns upon us, and then we go onward from one depth of significance to another; till at last, at the foundation of all, we come to Michel Angelo himself. He was forty months at work on the ceiling, from the spring of 1509 until the 1st of November, 1512; and it is a satisfaction to know that this immense series of paintings, equal in itself to a large picture gallery, were wholly the work of Michel Angelo's hand, and that we are not obliged to guess, as in Raphael's frescos, what portion was painted by the master and what by his assistants. The intermediate work on a picture, which is always least interesting to the artist, may very well be performed by a talented beginner, but there is always danger of this being carried too far. It was thus that Vandyke and others assisted on the pictures of Rubens.

The Sistine Chapel is the source and origin of all grandeur in modern painting. I can compare the effect of it to nothing less than the circle of snowy peaks which surround the Riffelberg at Zermatt. The awful figure of the Eternal repeated four times upon the ceiling; the prehistoric events of creation sketched out in broad and impressive masses; the

terrible spectacle of the Deluge; the inspired figures of prophets and sibyls, seated as it were on cornices in mid-air, combine to form an impression more intense, elevating, and sublime than the poetry of Dante or the music of Beethoven. The same effect could not have been produced in rooms like the *Camere* of Raphael. It is because we see these mighty creations at such a distance, and especially above us, as if we were looking into the sky, that we seem to follow them into the heights of space,—as if they were a celestial vision of the primeval world. Although Michel Angelo disliked his work here, he recognized the appropriateness of the situation for this class of subjects, and took advantage of it with a never-failing instinct.

Critics have vainly attempted to discover a rational or theological sequence in the paintings of the Sistine Chapel; but their only sequence is that which we find in the book of Genesis. The addition of the *Last Judgment* twenty years later was a fortunate circumstance which could not have been anticipated, and the choice of subject was Pope Adrian's and not Michel Angelo's. To begin at the very commencement of all things and reveal that beginning palpably and in pictorial form—this was clearly Michel Angelo's intention, and beyond it there was no occasion for his venturing, for this was sufficient in and of itself. In painting the ceiling, however, he did not commence with the division of the Heavens from the Earth, which is immediately above the altar of the chapel and could be most easily seen by persons entering at the door, but

with a representation of the Deluge at the farther end of the ceiling. That he did so to try his hand at this new work, and to gain practice before he exposed his art in a conspicuous position, cannot be doubted. It is equally certain that these first experiments are not painted with quite the same ease and grace as the later ones. The designs are admirable, but there is a sharpness in the folds of the draperies and in the contrasts of light and shadow which is noticeable, especially in the *Deluge* and the *Sacrifice of Noah* as compared with the figures of *genii* who serve as corner ornaments to those paintings. The figures in the *Deluge* are on a smaller scale from those in the other ceiling paintings, and it has been supposed that this was owing also to inexperience; but it is doubtful if Michel Angelo could have represented the subject so effectively with fewer figures, and the larger the number of figures of course the smaller they would have to be.

It is a scene full of life and energy, but quite as impressive from its moral effect and the sympathy it awakens, as for its dramatic realism. The flood has already risen to the mountain tops and the ark, a plain box-like structure, appears floating in the middle distance, to which a boat load of refugees are being conducted under Noah's supervision from the top of a mountain. Others are climbing up the opposite side, a struggling, desperate crowd, mostly naked, carrying children or primitive articles of furniture. The chief among them is the charming figure of a young mother, with a child in her arms, and an older one clinging to her left thigh—an

attitude beyond measure exquisite. A cowardly man is clutching the trunk of a tree in order to raise himself above the others, but his support is being blown over by the wind. Noah, with a long white beard, stands calm, collected, and dignified; but the dramatic effect is rather in mass than between individuals, the wild action, for instance, of those in the boat, which is in danger of foundering from the clutch of drowning swimmers.

The Sacrifice of Noah: Michel Angelo has preserved the same type of the Patriarch in both these frescos, which in vigor of design, variety of action, and dramatic interest surpass any of Raphael's cartoons. In the *Sacrifice* Noah appears behind the altar, and therefore diminished in figure, but in every line expressive of earnest, unconscious piety. A beautiful woman with foreshortened face stands at his right, and his aged wife leans forward on the left to whisper something in his ear; a most admirable group. In front the sacrificers are performing their office. One is carrying an armful of wood; another sits astride a ram that has just been slain; and the third drags forward another ram, with an ox appearing behind him in the background: occupations which afforded Michel Angelo the finest opportunity for an unconscious display of his power in delineating the human form.

Added to these, the *Drunkenness of Noah* serves to indicate the frailty of mortal character. He appears in the last fresco more venerable, but in contrast with this in the wholly undignified posture of a man overcome by wine. Ham has withdrawn the

covering from his father's body in order to make his disgrace more painfully apparent, but Shem or Japhet rebukes his brother for this, while the third brother lifts up the garment to replace it. The picture is full of brilliant contrasts—lines that break like waves against one another and harmonize in their breaking—all toned down by the sweet austerity of Michel Angelo's nature. The figure of Noah is drawn in a grand manner without being in the least grandiose, and painted with exceptional softness and delicacy. Although drunken he is Noah still; and the beauty of his left arm and torso is "like sweet strains or pensive smiles." Ham is distinguished by an inferior and not very pleasant physique, surmounted by a round, bullet-shaped head. The group is relieved against a rocky ledge, similar to that which appears in the London *Entombment*; good additional proof that the unfinished *Entombment* was painted by Michel Angelo himself. At one side of this a husbandman is digging with a spade, perhaps to indicate Noah's culture of the vine.

The Almighty appears four times on the ceiling of the chapel in his transcendent power as ruler of the universe, and a fifth time in more human guise in direct relation with mankind, as the creator of Mother Eve. This was the most ambitious of all Michel Angelo's efforts, and it is far from being unsuccessful. The impersonation of a great beneficent force floating in the pure ether by a volition of his own, or riding on the wings of the wind is expressed with sufficient adequacy to fill our minds with wonder and admiration. Never was Michel Angelo's

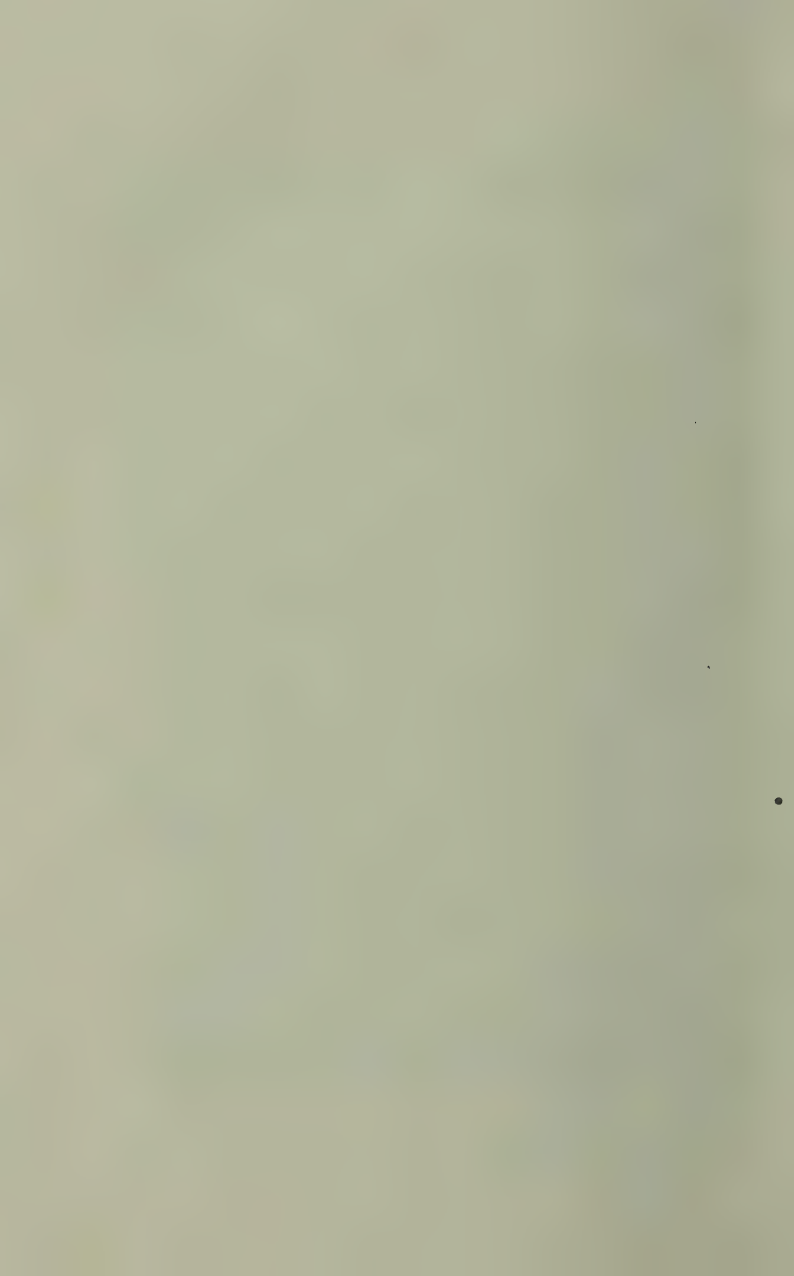
mind more pure, never was he more absolutely himself in his devotion to his subject, than in this series of frescos which fill the first half of the Sistine ceiling. In the first scene God appears in the act of creating heaven and earth, nearly covering with his figure one of the smaller compartments immediately above the altar. His face is turned upward and his arms raised above his head, as if he were in the act of spreading the blue vault of heaven across the empyrean. His robes encircle his limbs in a majestic swirl which gives the impression of swift and energetic movement. He is borne through the air by a superhuman volition, requiring neither wings nor feet for locomotion.

In the second, larger division appears the *Creation of Light*, represented by a large white semicircle which the Almighty touches with outstretched hand as he flies swiftly through space. A figure attired in fluttering drapery, probably representing darkness, disappears before him like a cloud after the gale, and three youthful spirits are partially hidden in his mantle. This is the grandest of the series, and if the superhuman has been adequately represented since the time of Phidias, it is in this fresco.

The meaning of the next division is uncertain, but it may refer to the creation of the moon and stars, or to the separation of land and water. The Almighty appears flying toward the spectator; a variation from the preceding more in attitude than in motive. His attitude, however, has a significance, for it introduces us to the next scene, where we find Adam just waking to life on the edge of a



"IL PENSIERO," BY MICHELANGELO
(In *Medici Chapel*) Church of S. Lorenzo, Florence



cliff which represents the earth. He is still too weak to hold out his arm, which rests upon his bended knee, as the Almighty extends his hand to endow him with vitality. The design in this instance is largely imitated from the doors of Ghiberti, but amplified and filled with a potent energy which Ghiberti knew not of. The Almighty is attended by a host of youthful spirits, who crowd within his mantle and look out from it with faces full of joyous devotion. The contrast between this group, so full of elevated power, and the dreamy lassitude of Adam's condition, whose attitude is like that of one awakening from prolonged slumber, is the more effective from its perfect naturalness. The figure of Adam is typical of a strong, vigorous man, muscular without exaggeration, but his features though pleasing are more characteristic than regular.

In the fifth division the Almighty appears in an attitude of benignant authority, evoking Mother Eve from Adam's side. Here he is less majestic and more human, more like the Heavenly Father of Ghiberti. Eve does not correspond to Milton's expression, "the fairest of her daughters"; but an elegant gazelle-like figure of a woman would not harmonize here with her surroundings. She is a substantial matron, the fitting progenitor of the human race during primeval conditions; and her attitude of grateful reverence to her Creator is simply feminine and beautiful. The drawing of these scenes is so forcible and expressive that it seems as if Michel Angelo's hand must have been guided by a metacarpal instinct.

In the next large division are represented both the *Temptation of the Serpent* and the *Expulsion from Paradise*, filling the field with a well balanced composition, whose arrangement is nevertheless unstudied and informal. Raphael could give an appearance of naturalness to a formal arrangement; but Michel Angelo was not obliged to do this, so naturally and informally did the conception of a subject enter his mind. The present instance is an admirable illustration of a perfectly balanced design without the least effort for counterpoise. Eve appears at the extreme right of the scene and also at the left, but at some distance from the margin. The tree is not exactly in the centre of the field, and its branches extend over the left-hand upper corner. The angel with the sword is placed slightly above the others; and yet these inequalities would seem to be adjusted by a few simple lines of background. Eve plucks the fruit with the assistance of the scaly tempter, and offers it to Adam, who reclines in a luxurious attitude beneath. In the *Expulsion* Adam and Eve have the very aspect of unhappiness, to which the attitude of Eve adds an expression of deep contrition. This fresco brings us again to the *Sacrifice of Noah*.

The guardian *genii* which Michel Angelo painted at the four corners of the smaller divisions are among the rarest of his creations. In no other subject perhaps does he seem so perfectly at home; in no other does the mystic fantasy of his nature find such free expression. They number twenty in all; yet every one has a pronounced individuality, an atti-

tude of his own, and an expression of countenance so original that we know we have seen it for the first time, and for the last. What are they thinking of there, what emotions have they, seated on those square blocks of marble from which they can never move? What was Michel Angelo dreaming of when he created them? They are the children of his fancy,—of the imagination of the moment, a thought never to be recalled, never to be explained. So much the more interesting and valuable. Attached to the *Sacrifice of Noah* there is a youth with almost classic features, resting partly on his left hand, his right wrist upon his knee, his legs from the knee down turned almost at right angles; yet his attitude has an ease and elegance that is fascinating; his face is expressive of the noblest contemplation. Opposite to him there is another *genius*, twisted about so that he looks over his right shoulder, and his left hand rests close to the right hip. His eyes are turned as if he beheld some strange phenomenon, like a meteor or a volcanic explosion. They seem to be supporting a large mirror between them. The third on this division has raised his right arm over his brow as if to protect himself from some missile, or perhaps in apprehension of the approach of a spirit more powerful than himself. His attitude is like one engaged in combat, but it is evidently not a combat of physical forces. Attached to the *Creation of Eve* there is a *genius* of heavier mould and almost Ethiopian features, bent over so that one hand touches his feet, and the other, holding the end of a mantle, rests on the top of his head. He looks

across the Chapel with an expression which seems to correspond with his attitude, but the meaning of it is an insoluble problem. They are the guardians of the work of Michel Angelo, to protect it from century to century against all that is vicious and profane.

At one of the angles of the *Expulsion from Paradise* there is a *genius loci* with a huge cornucopia over his shoulder filled with oak leaves and acorns, an emblem of the Rovere family. He is the incarnation of merriment, with a humorous nose, and eyes full of mischief and laughter. His hair, twisted into large tufts, stands out from his head. His attitude is in harmony with the rest. He resembles Shakespeare's Puck, and may be intended for the genius of comedy.

At the farther corner of the ceiling there is another *genius loci*, the most perfect and elegant figure in the Sistine Chapel. He is an Achilles in form, and a poet in contemplative beauty. He will remind you of Byron, but he is much too fine for Byron. The *Apollo Belvidere* seems poor to him. His features are classic, noble, and dignified. He is seated on a mat of braided rushes which rests on a block of marble; his left hand rests on his knee and his hair is confined in a fillet. Who or what he is we know not; but he may be intended for the genius of tragedy.

In the four spaces left by the arching of the vault Michel Angelo represented three subjects celebrating the triumph of the Jews over their enemies: David beheading Goliath, Judith carrying off the head of

Holofernes, the execution of Haman,—and also the worship of the brazen serpent. Of these the second and third are more interesting than the others from the nature of their subjects. It would be impossible to introduce a gallows sixty cubits in height in such a painting, so Michel Angelo has represented Haman crucified on the trunk of a tree, with his arms nailed to its branches; a heavy, coarse figure without any redeeming grace, significant of his base nature. On one side Mordecai appears seated at the king's gate, and Esther, a fine type of Hebrew beauty, conversing with him; on the other, Haman appears at table with Esther and Ahasuerus, and Esther accuses him of his conspiracy against the Israelites. Thus the story is told as simply and more powerfully than in the *Esther* of Racine. The dramatic action of the scene in which Esther accuses Haman could not be surpassed for its effective realism. There would seem to have been a fund of dramatic characterization in Michel Angelo which found no sufficient chance to develop itself, and except for these scanty remnants it would have remained wholly lost to the world.

In *Judith with the Head of Holofernes* Michel Angelo shows his dramatic power in the fewest figures and simplest lines. The huge form of Holofernes lies decapitated on his bed, almost concealed by the deep shadows. Outside the chamber door Judith stands, holding his head on a platter, so that an assistant may cover it with a cloth. No faces are visible: that of Judith is nearly covered by her raised arm, and the other woman's is turned

from the spectator. Their attitude and movement are indicative of most profound secrecy, but at the same time calm and deliberate. The sharpness in the folds of her drapery may also have its significance.

Even more interesting than these grand illustrations from the first chapters of Genesis is the range of prophets and sibyls round the border of the ceiling; for they possess that intellectual quality which is the chief glory of Florentine art. No one could better understand their nature than Michel Angelo, for, like them, he had separated himself from mankind and lived in loneliness in order to instruct and elevate mankind. He also had sought wisdom in the desert, and kept watch for the coming of the eternal spirit. Rome was his desert, and the old Hebrew prophets were his companions there. He knew every one of them, and represented them with the same fidelity with which he would have painted the portrait of a friend. He threw himself into this work with the zeal of a devotee and the passion of a lover. The more perfectly human nature is developed the more *sui generis* it becomes; and each of these twelve figures has an individuality which strikes us like a sudden peal of organ music. Their special character is contemplative depth, but their several individualities are expressed not only in form and feature, but in the greatest freedom and variety of attitudes. They have nowhere any trace of conventionality. Each prophet and sibyl is attended by two spirits of inspiration in the form of beautiful boys, to whom, although invisible to them, they are listening attentively.

The sibyls are a Græco-Roman graft on the tree of mediæval Christianity. One has only to read Dante's *Inferno* to discover how many such grafts there were. His *Inferno* was the same Hades into which Ulysses descended to inquire of Teiresias concerning his journey. It is full of the monsters of Grecian mythology mixed up with Christian devils, and Minos, son of Jupiter, is the judge who presides over them all, — apparently much more than Satan, the true king of the realm of shades. There was need of the sibyls to represent the strong feminine element in Christianity, for the Jews, though some notable women appear in their history, did not, as a rule, feel an equal respect for the weaker sex. Witness Solomon and his five hundred wives as compared with the household of Pericles or Cicero. Either of these seems to have been foreign enough to Michel Angelo's sense, but a noble virago (for such are possible) was a woman after his own heart.

Isaias : A front face turned to the right. He is seated like the others, but his attitude and mantle indicate mental activity. His left elbow rests on the Book of Prophecy, and he seizes its leaves with his right hand. The book is bound evidently in Roman vellum. His head is not large, but compressed, and his beardless face shows long endurance and self-denial. He is listening to the spirit, on whose face there is a bright gleam of light. His mantle floats off in a zigzag line illuminated at the edge, suggestive of a flash of lightning.

Joel : A front face turned to the left. There is

a spirit on each side of him, one of them giving directions to the other, but Joel does not hear it; he is reading from a scroll stretched out between his hands. His head is finely rounded like that of a judge or governor: the prophetic statesman, such as Burke or Sumner.

Zacharias: Seen in profile reading a book similar to the one Isaias carries; a bald-headed man with long, flowing white beard, noble and dignified. The two spirits stand behind his chair with their arms affectionately entwined about each other's necks—a very beautiful group. These boy-spirits would seem to be an invention of Michel Angelo's, for I cannot recollect meeting with them elsewhere. They are neither cherubs nor angels, but pages who carry the divine message.

Daniel: Leaning forward to the right, the head of heroic mould, equally great in thought or action, with a mass of wavy hair. The book lies open in front of him, but he pays no attention to it. A small spirit supports it from beneath or it would fall from his lap. He is absorbed in his ideas.

Jonas has the place of honor, for he is directly above the altar of the Chapel, and also above the Messiah in the *Last Judgment*, but if we are to discriminate where all are excellent, he and the two others are hardly equal to the first four.

No one who has entered the Sistine Chapel ever forgets the *Cumean Sibyl*. She is the most enigmatic of all Michel Angelo's creations, and, except his *Moses*, perhaps the grandest. Her white head-dress is so arranged as to give the appearance of a steel

casque with the visor drawn up; and underneath this is her dark face furrowed with age, care, and character; but so attractive! Let it not be said any longer that only youth and comeliness are beautiful, for here is an old hag who is more fascinating than Titian's *Flora*. Her herculean arm matches the face,—a wonderful piece of painting which causes us to reflect whether any woman could have such an arm or not; while the two boys stand gazing at her lovingly.

The *Cumean Sibyl* looks as if she might have been grandmother to Romulus and Remus. The *Libyan* and *Delphic Sibyls* are Grecian, as they should be; and sufficiently refute the argument, so often advanced, that Michel Angelo despised beauty and would have nothing to do with it. He always subordinated beauty to character, and was sparing of the use of it, but where he could suitably unite the two it appears so much the more conspicuous. The *Libyan Sibyl** has turned herself half-way round, and has lifted the Book of Prophecy so high that her face is outlined against its pages. Such an attitude affords the finest opportunity to display her bare arms and shoulders, which are painted with an ease and smoothness that is almost incredible. Her features remind one slightly of the statue of *David*, but are more regular, and perfectly feminine. You have seen sometimes on a bright day how beautiful the landscape becomes when a light cloud passes

* The Libyan Sibyl was the daughter of Epiphus and Cassiopeia. She lived in a cave between the Mediterranean and the Great Desert. The Erythrean Sibyl lived in like manner by the Red Sea.

over the sun. Well, the expression of her face is very much like that. Her exquisite feet, and the two boy-spirits whispering together in a corner, complete this unrivalled picture. It is all the more charming from the mystery which attaches to the sibyl's attitude. What mental condition is represented by this we cannot tell, and perhaps Michel Angelo himself would have been unable to explain it; a passing inspiration,—“a feeling deeper than all thought,” which he could not afterwards remember.

There can be no question as to the meaning of the *Delphic Sibyl*. The spirit of prophecy is upon her; her eyes gleam with it, and her oval face is full of light. It is rather remarkable that she is looking toward the centre of the Chapel, and yet does not appear to be looking out from the picture; as happens so often in portraits and groups of figures. Her left arm crosses her breast as if to tear something away from her. Every stroke with which she is painted is intelligent and vital.

The *Erythrean Sibyl* is Roman again, and has an arm like a gladiator; but she has been very much admired, and engravings of her are common,—although the plastic ease of Michel Angelo seems to defy the engraver's art. Her face is in profile, and her features of heroic mould.

There are from twenty to thirty pictures of the ancestors of Jesus in the lunettes, but few people have time or strength to study them after looking at the larger and more important works on the ceiling. Yet they deserve consideration, if for nothing else, to see how much variety can be introduced into

a subject so often repeated. In some instances Michel Angelo has represented a husband, wife, and child; in others two of these, or only a single figure. We know too little about the ancestors of Jesus to give them a tangible personality, with the exception of Solomon, David, and one or two others. A thorough knowledge of the Bible is essential to an understanding of Italian art, but it must be a spiritual knowledge,—not merely a formal understanding of the text. In the present case, however, the text is all that we have to depend on. Jacob with Rachel and Joseph are a fine patriarchal group, and David is recognized, as usual, from his harp; but Solomon does not appear anywhere, and instead of him we have a woman with a distaff. The group of Josias with his wife and child, however, shines forth from among the rest like a star of the first magnitude. This famous painting discloses a side of Michel Angelo's nature which we could not have suspected from any of the prophets and sibyls: and that is pure and simple loveliness. We perceive at once that the picture is too good for its subject, that instead of Josias it ought to represent Joseph and Mary and Jesus; and it is well enough to make this change in our own minds with regard to it.

Such a work could only be accomplished under the most favorable physical and mental conditions: when we are at peace with the world and well balanced in ourselves. It is so perfect that, so far as drawing and shading are concerned, it might be taken as a standard by which even Michel Angelo would often be judged unequal.

It is the ideal type of a family. The round frame of the *Madonna della Sedia* adds to the homelike tone which pervades the whole picture, and a similar effect is produced by enclosing the family of Josias in a triangular space which resembles a tent. We all know what pretty groups are often formed in tents, because the occupants are obliged to arrange themselves with due regard to one another. The sensible plainness of Josias is contrasted here with the lovely faces of his wife and child. She is bending towards the boy, who stands at her knee perfectly nude. There is the same classic beauty in his form that appears in her face, so that if they were separated by the whole length of the Chapel, it would be perceived nevertheless that they belonged together. Her head-dress is in itself a work of art, and helps to carry out the idea. Their expression is that of spiritual expectation. Like the *Madonna della Sedia*, it is a classic romance, a lyric gem (also like the Book of Ruth), and the only one that Michel Angelo painted. If it were in an accessible gallery instead of being so lost, as it were, among a multitude of objects, it would become one of the most popular and widely known pictures; for there is nothing the world prizes so much as this kind of art.

An enamelled figure of a woman dressed in the latest fashion might for some moments be mistaken for a living person, but a statue, although perfectly true to nature, never could be. So it is with the frescos in the Sistine Chapel. Michel Angelo was not an imitative, but a representative artist; as

sculptors always should be. We do not find in him those wonderful illusions such as Murillo and the great Venetians sometimes achieved. There is no such solid ground under Adam and Eve as the carriers of Tintoretto's Golden Calf walk upon. There is no such depth to his skies as enchants us in Murillo's *Immaculate Conception*. The naked shoulders of his *Libyan Sibyl* are smooth and soft as satin, but they have not the similitude of flesh like that in Titian's *Danaë*. Yet we would not desire that these paintings should be other than they are.

Michel Angelo's coloring has often been condemned, but it seems to me particularly well suited to the class of subjects in which he dealt. We do not want to come too close to Adam and the old prophets. They seem far off to us, and it is better they should retain their antiquated look. For this purpose nothing could be more conducive than Michel Angelo's drawing; and his dull grays and russets, bronze draperies, and olive greens—like the tints of faded leaves—are equally effective. His coloring was subordinate to his design, and evidently intended to harmonize with the architecture. The gorgeous *chiaroscuro* of Correggio would be wasted on them, and Titian's warm, sensuous tones would have been still more out of place.

It was in the Sistine Chapel that Michel Angelo first acquired the grandiose style by which he is generally known. Here his personality took possession of him, and carried him onward with a power which his acquired judgment could not resist. Henceforth he drew, not according to an idea of

how things ought to be, but by an irresistible impulse which carried him he knew not whither. When Carlyle's brother complained to him of the peculiar style in which his *French Revolution* was written, he replied: "You may think what you please, but no other is possible for me." I believe, in Carlyle's case, and Emerson's also, that they could not have written otherwise than as they did. It was the same with Michel Angelo. We may think what we please of this peculiarity of his, but it was only through this that he attained his freest and most complete development. It was only thus that he could give full expression to the great pictorial ideas within him. *Isaias* and the *Cumean Sibyl* contain more than the *David* and the *Pietà*; they are the *David* and the *Pietà* with the addition of an unknown quantity, and it is in the solution of this new problem that we find the highest pleasure. It is a part of the mystery which underlies the consciousness of mankind.

This grandiose style should be carefully distinguished from the muscular mannerism into which Michel Angelo frequently lapsed during the latter part of his life, and which may be traced to a wholly different cause. It is not necessary to suppose that there is any exaggeration in it. I have seen a Turkish porter whose arms were as large as those of the *Cumean Sibyl*, though not nearly so handsome. He said that there were many like him in Turkey. The mediæval custom of fighting in steel armor had developed men physically to an extent of which we now meet with few examples. Michel Angelo

liked such powerful figures. They have the solidity of sculpture, but not the coldness of marble: they are warm and instinct with the pulsations of life.

There is one of the *genii*, with a strange-looking cap on his head, whose eyes seem to follow the visitor from the time he comes in till he goes out again, and will perhaps haunt him for days afterward.

No wonder the old Pope was impatient. He was draining out the very dregs of life, and his physicians thought that only his determined will still carried him through the routine of his office. In November, 1512, he officiated in the newly decorated Chapel for the first time, and we can imagine what a dignified occasion it must have been for him. In spite of all expectation, he still held out for fifteen months longer; when Italy lost her ablest defender and Michel Angelo his best patron,—and, if he had known it, perhaps also his best friend. The frigid neglect with which he was received at the court of Leo X. may have forced Michel Angelo to this conclusion. The successor of Julius was a luxurious dilettante, to whom Michel Angelo's frankness and rugged sincerity were not so pleasing as they might have been to a nobler nature. The current had turned in another direction.

Raphael ruled everything during the reign of Leo X., and Michel Angelo, after working for some time on the monument of Julius II. (finishing the two *Captives* at least), was relegated to Florence to construct a façade for the Church of San Lorenzo, and from thence to Carrara to superintend the quarry-

ing of marble for that purpose. His correspondence with Sebastian del Piombo, in which the latter makes some keen criticism of Raphael's work and proceedings, throws a brighter light over this period than most other portions of his life. Sebastian wished the Pope would allow them a *camera* in the Vatican, for which Michel Angelo could draw the designs and he himself would do the painting; but Leo was too shrewd to permit this direct competition between Michel Angelo and Raphael, which could only result to the disadvantage of the latter,—for Sebastian was also a better colorist than any of Raphael's assistants. He offered Sebastian one of the chambers occupied by Alexander Borgia, and Sebastian declined it. This peculiar partnership, however, was not without important consequences in the history of Italian art.

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS.

A somewhat faded picture in the National Gallery records the friendship between Michel Angelo and Sebastian del Piombo and their united opposition to Raphael. It was painted at the height of the Raphael craze and does not appear to have attracted the interest it deserved at the time it was finished, though Sebastian wrote to Michel Angelo that those who spoke with him concerning it esteemed it superior to Raphael's cartoons. There were, no doubt, cool-headed and sensible judges not carried away in the general current of adulation for 'the Prince of the Synagogue.' When in good



"THE LIBYAN SIBYL," BY MICHELANGELO

Sistine Chapel, Rome

condition it must easily have surpassed any of the cartoons. The traditional notion that it was painted in direct competition with Raphael's *Transfiguration* is one of the myths of Italian art history; for the *Transfiguration* still remained unfinished at Raphael's death and we may judge from Sebastian's letters that the *Raising of Lazarus* was completed before that was begun. The comparison with the cartoons would seem to be sufficient evidence of this.

Michel Angelo's drawing was as much superior to Raphael's as the skill of Raphael's brush was superior to Sebastian's. Nevertheless Sebastian was a fine colorist and had an excellent *chiaroscuro*. Although he was unable to do full justice to Michel Angelo's design, their composite picture in its pristine condition must have been one of the most magnificent oil paintings of the sixteenth century. The plain truthfulness of Michel Angelo's drapery alone gives it the advantage over the ill-suited grace of the group of disciples and the epileptic boy in the *Transfiguration*; but no design of Raphael's contains such varied attitudes, such strongly characteristic faces, animated, surprised, or serious, as the occasion required. Christ stands on a marble step and with a majestic motion of his hand seems to raise Lazarus from the earth by some inscrutable power; while the father and mother still kneel in supplication before him. Lazarus, still in a torpid condition, looks dreamily toward the Saviour, and plucks at his bandages. His figure is powerful enough for a Milo, but not inappropriate. St John, with a spiritual

face, exchanges glances with another disciple at the right hand of Jesus. The trunk of a giant tree, apparently an oak, rises up behind the group, and beyond this there is an unrivalled Roman landscape containing a river arched by a bridge, houses and ruins, far-off hills, and a far-off roll of illumined clouds in the sky. The contrast between the grand physique of Lazarus and the spiritual majesty of the Saviour is more than effective; as also that between the man who presses eagerly to observe the result of the miracle and the woman who starts back in holy terror from the spectacle. Again we revert to the magnetic figure of Christ, the noble earnestness of his face, and the beautiful lines of his drapery.

Of a wholly different character from the preceding, but most nearly related to the *Captives* of the Louvre, is the *Apollo* made for Baccio Vallori and now in the Bargello at Florence. Yet it is distinguished from them by a well defined though graceful accentuation of the muscles; for in the *Captives* the muscular system is barely perceptible. The statue is less than the size of life, Hellenic without being godlike, and the head still remains unfinished. He is in the act of drawing an arrow from over his right shoulder, and his head is turned to the left in order to favor this movement. The right foot is raised upon a stone and the centre of gravity falls under the left heel; as in the *Venus of Melos*. His limbs are beautifully modelled, and the attitude is easy, graceful, and charming; but there does not

appear to be any further intellectual depth of motive. The statue is allied in the *naïveté* and unconscious grace of its action to the *Diadumenos* of Polycleitus. It is slightly feminine in figure and might easily be mistaken for an overgrown Eros.

Grimm speaks of the *Christ Triumphant* in the Church of Sta. Maria sopra Minerva at Rome as the first of Michel Angelo's statues or paintings which suffers from mannerism. It suffers more perhaps from the clumsy elaboration of his assistants, to whom he entrusted it, after finishing the head and leaving the limbs fairly blocked out. This was Raphael's common method of procedure, and perhaps Michel Angelo thought, if all the world was cheating, he might do a little also. At all events it is the only instance we know of in which he adopted this method. If we are to believe Sebastian del Piombo, Michel Angelo placed the work in charge of an untrustworthy fellow who attempted to improve on his master's design after the statue had been transported to Rome. Having accomplished this mischief the sculptor, whose name was Frizzi, took to gambling, so Sebastian states, and went very shortly to the devil.* Exactly in what way Frizzi modified the statue we do not know, but it would be hardly fair to class it among Michel Angelo's genuine works, especially as he offered the Roman gentleman who donated it something better in its place. It is interesting, however, as the first instance of a type of Christ which he afterwards

* Symonds' *Life of Michel Angelo*, i., 363.

adopted in the *Last Judgment*. It is a development of the pagan rather than the Christian idea of spiritual power; and the face, at least as we have it now, certainly does not wear a religious expression. What Michel Angelo seemed to have attempted in this instance was the incarnation of an irresistible will.

MICHEL ANGELO'S "SLEEP."

The *Dream of Life* by Michel Angelo, a black-and-white study in the National Gallery, would seem like an afterpiece to the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. It is so strongly saturated with the personality of the man, and also so enigmatic as to produce something like a feeling of repulsion. A naked woman of sibylline aspect is seated on a box containing a collection of masks. Her hands are extended to her left side, and rest upon a large globe which appears to represent the earth. An angel descending from above in a rather grotesque attitude applies a trumpet to her ear, and her face wears an expression as of one listening to important information,—admirably portrayed. The background is filled with clouds in which various scenes from human life are represented in a partial and dreamy manner. A man is seated behind a table as one might see him at a tavern. Above him another is drinking out of a flask. Another, more shadowy, has his arms about the neck of a shadowy woman: others are fighting and struggling together. One is bent over, with his bald head almost between his knees. Faces

and heads appear amid the clouds with various expressions.

This composition has been miscalled. The naked woman in it is intended for a goddess, and her name is,—*Sleep*. She rests her arms upon the globe because sleep takes possession of all things that have life; and she is seated on a box of masks because the hypocritical faces which people wear in the day-time have to be laid aside when they go to rest. The clouds and dreams are her attendants, though she does not cause them, and though she makes others unconscious she is thoroughly awake herself. If she were not awake there would be no rest, and mankind would perish. By the angel with the trumpet, Michel Angelo would seem to indicate his belief that divine messages come to us in our dreams, and his figure is twisted because these messages take an indirect or enigmatic form. The originality of this allegory is not exceeded by that of the design in which it is expressed, and the perfection of its details, even to the mantle of Sleep which lies upon the box of masks, is in harmony with the general conception.

THE CHAPEL OF THE MEDICI.

The Emperor Charles Fifth has received credit for a great deal of magnificence which did not belong to him. He inherited, by the fortunate decease of relatives in the families with which he was connected, a vast political possession, which was increased by the skill and good fortune of his regents while he

was still in early years. Afterwards, when he undertook the direct management of affairs, he made numerous blunders, and showed himself as unskilful a diplomat as he was a superficial statesman. He possessed certain personal virtues which seem intended by nature to cover such deficiencies.

The battle of Pavia made him master of Upper Italy, although it was a success gained by German troops while he was in Madrid. This induced him to revive the ancient Ghibelline claim to the sovereignty of the whole country. The Pope, of course, attempted to resist this. It was now Clement VII. who was in the chair; another Medici, but not more judicious than Charles himself. It was a desperate position for Clement to be placed in, for material forces he had none, and the German heresy had shorn him of his spiritual terrors; so he concluded an alliance with Francis I. and Henry VIII., who were both at odds with Charles, but equally unable to render assistance. The sacking of Rome by a Protestant and Spanish army followed soon after; Clement was humiliated, and after a siege of nine months in the Castle of St. Angelo, he acknowledged the imperial pretensions on condition that the Medici should be forcibly restored to Florence and become hereditary dukes of Tuscany.

This plan agreed well with the emperor's political notions. Wherever Charles set his foot, it was to crush out local independence; and the mischief he did in this way is incalculable. Like many another narrow-minded ruler he supposed he was increasing the royal authority by centralization. So he did,

for the time being; but true political force, like all other forms of strength, requires exercise, and in order to have healthy exercise there must be some object of resistance. The government of Charles and his son Philip might be compared to a man who is stimulated by brandy. It showed surprising vigor for a time, but in less than a century collapsed most pitifully, and not only ruined Spain and Italy, but the royal family also.

It will be remembered, moreover, that those countries in which the arts have flourished most luxuriantly—that is, Greece, Italy, and the Netherlands—have enjoyed the maximum of local independence; and that when they have lost this their art declined also. Charles V., however, for a man of active intelligence, cared little for art and literature. After having admired Giotto's Campanile and having his portrait painted by Titian, he troubled himself no further in regard to either of them. The restoration of the Medici as a line of hereditary dukes brought the school of Florentine art to an untimely end. The coincidence at least is a suspicious one.

Such was the political background while Michel Angelo was carving the statues for the Medici Chapel in the Church of San Lorenzo. That it appeared to him, as it does to us, we may feel sure from his active participation in the defence of Florence, and from the verse which he afterwards attached to his statue of *Night*: "Sleep is grateful to me, and it is better to be of stone, so long as shame and dishonor continue with us." This was

the most unsatisfactory portion of Michel Angelo's life; so much so that it affected his physical condition, and his friends in Florence became anxious lest his health should give way beneath the strain. The Duke of Urbino was justly indignant for the delay in completing the monument of his uncle Julius II., and yet it was not in Michel Angelo's power to help this.

Superintending the excavation of marble in the Apennines was not suitable work for such a man, though he must have enjoyed some wonderful sunsets there with those tender, all-perceiving eyes of his. Leo X. ought to have appointed him architect of St. Peter's; but Leo evidently disliked him, and the building progressed little during his papacy. The great block of marble in Florence, a companion piece to the *David*, which Michel Angelo wished to carve into a *Samson*, was awarded to Bendinelli, whose *Hercules and Caicus* is at the same time its own criticism and that of the sculptor who made it; if we had not already Cellini's satirical commentary on both of them. Altogether it was the most discouraging period of Michel Angelo's life, and it was unavoidable that the works he produced at this time should have a notably subjective cast.

The statues for the Medici Chapel were not yet finished when the siege of Florence came to disturb the customary avocations of its citizens, and make a wide breach between their past and their future lives. It is well known that the *Day* and *Evening* have never been completed, and various reasons have been suggested for this. Some have supposed



"ISAIAH," BY MICHELANGELO

Sistine Chapel, Rome

that he left them unfinished because he knew not what the day would bring forth to Florence; whether it would be a day of rejoicing or of servitude. This is not in accord with the prodigious fertility of Michel Angelo's invention, and his faculty for creating new forms and faces. It would seem more likely that after the catastrophe of the siege he lost his interest in the work. It is true he returned to it for a time, but not long after peace had been established he went to Rome and never saw Florence again. There is a sentence in Condivi's biography of Michel Angelo from which we may judge that he feared the resentment of the Duke Alessandro, who was an illegitimate Medici, well known to be cruel and vindictive.

Before considering these noblest works of modern sculpture, I feel how inadequate must be anything that I can say of them.

In order to enter into their conception from the very germ, we should remember that in Italian day and evening are masculine, night and morning feminine. To Anglo-Saxon ears night and day are now scientific abstractions, but to the mediæval Italian they possessed a personality such as a ship does to a sailor, and the moon has for our poets. We immediately recognize Thorwaldsen's conception of Night as a winged angel with a sleeping child at her breast, and an owl flying at some little distance; but Michel Angelo's figure of a sleeping woman is a sleeping enigma to the general traveller, and she is nothing more. "What a profound slum-

ber she is in!" said a cultivated lady, standing before the two heroic figures. This in itself is wonderful enough, for it is not in the least like the sleep of death, and the statue seems alive from her brow to her feet. As the modulation of the limbs of the *Venus dei Medici* shows that she is standing on the ground by an act of her own will, so the statue of *La Notte* expresses her own mental condition, and every muscle in her body and limbs has an activity which corresponds to that. She sleeps, she dreams, but it is not a dream of innocence and peace. It is the sleep of *sorrow* which Michel Angelo has given us here, and it is that which impresses us so powerfully—as realism never could.

Similarly in his *Morning* he has represented the awakening of *grief*. Her limbs and body express the languor of the first few minutes of consciousness; but her face is a tragedy. Admirers of Michel Angelo have condemned this statue as being too realistic, but it is only the realistic basis, here as in the *Night* and the *Il Penseros* above, on which he raises a superstructure of Shakspearian sentiment. This might be Roman Lucretia awakening to the last sad day of life. In Calderon's *Alcade of Zalamea*, Isabella, the worthy compeer of Desdemona, says: "Oh, never might the light of day arise and disclose to me my shame! O fleeting morning star, would thou mightst never yield to the dawn that now presses on thy azure skirts!" Such may have been the conception of a goddess mourning for the woes of her favorite people,—the children of the morning land.

The features of *Night* and *Morning* are sufficiently alike to carry out the supposition that they were intended for sisters. The Medici, of course, understood the suffering and sorrow—if any of them were capable of appreciating it—as a tribute to the untimely death of their relatives Lorenzo and Julian. So also Michel Angelo may at first have intended it, but as events developed he and his fellow-citizens associated it more and more with the subjugation of Italy. The two statues may even have represented to him the fate of Florence and Milan.

How is it that these statues, which are not much larger than life, appear so grandiose? They are not men and women, but gods and goddesses. If we should stand on the shore of a desert island and see far out a boat approaching, rowed by a single person, whose regular energetic strokes seem to be those of a man, and yet on nearer approach we discovered that it was a woman, and on still closer observation we discovered that she was of unusual size, and that her features, though large, were refined and regular, we should certainly believe that she came from an unknown land, and feel the same sensation, though of course more vividly, that we do when we enter the Medici Chapel, and find ourselves in the presence of the *Night* and *Morning*.

How has Michel Angelo succeeded in producing this effect? Why is it that the gigantic *David* looks to us like a youth, while the *Night* and *Day* seem almost colossal?

Complaint has been made that the statues are too large for the *sarcophagi* on which they rest, but I

believe this is exactly the effect which Michel Angelo intended for them. There is something in their attitudes as if they were accustomed to ample spaces. We might even fancy them reclining on the roof of St. Peter's. Then they are devoid of anything like prettiness. If we compare the *Morning*, for instance, with the *Venus of Milo* or the *Venus of the Capitol*, we perceive instantly a wide difference between her proportions and the conventional standard of feminine beauty. The breasts of the *Venus of Milo* have a graceful curve, but those of the *Night* are more like rude hillocks, and yet the statue is finished everywhere with incomparable nicety. There is an expression also in the brow suggestive of unusual force. No man ever fell in love with a woman of such an aspect. The Greek sculptor who became enamored of the statue he had made would not have had such a thought in the presence of Michel Angelo's *Night*.

Their nudity is becoming to them and adds to the sense of their grandeur. They have no need of clothes as a protection from either heat, cold, modesty, or deformity.

The unfinished *Day* tempts our curiosity to know what lies beyond his owlish countenance. He is rising up as if he would tear the building into pieces in his might. This movement throws the muscles of his side, especially the *serratus magnus*, into relief and produces an undulation on the marble which resembles ripple marks on a sea-beach. His twin-brother *Evening* is more nearly finished, and is like an enigma to us, which we know we could guess if

we only had more light concerning it. He seems to be enjoying that relaxation after exercise which only the strong can know.

The house of Medici has been extinct for an hundred and fifty years, but it was not until the spring of 1860, about the same time as the nomination of President Lincoln, that a new day dawned for Florence as the capital of United Italy. It was a short and by no means glorious day, however, for it came to an end with the occupation of Rome ten years later.

If Michel Angelo made answer to the man who complained that his statues of *Juliano* and *Lorenzo de' Medici* were not good portraits, that in one or two hundred years nobody would care how those two Medici looked, he proved himself a prophet. We do not care a straw how they looked. The statue of *Juliano*, at least, called *Il Penseros* has long since passed out of the region of portraiture. It has become the ideal of contemplation, and so completely is this effect forced upon us that we begin to feel dreamy from gazing upon it a few minutes. His suit of plain mediæval armor increases this effect. He is a soldier who is resting himself after battle, to reflect on the mystery of life and death. There are few works of art which so impress their mood on the spectator.

Before the publication of Grimm's *Life of Michel Angelo* it was supposed, even by Italians, that this statue represented Lorenzo the Magnificent, and the one opposite, his brother Juliano, who was killed in

the conspiracy of the Pazzi. An American writer,* who looked upon the old Lorenzo as the betrayer of Florentine liberty, thought he discovered something dark and sinister in the expression of his face. How gratuitous this was may be judged from the fact that the face still remains unfinished, but few people discover this, because it is so much overshadowed by his helmet; and in addition this particular Julianò (for there were three or more of them) was a most harmless and inoffensive person, who suffered much from ill-health, and perhaps deserved this monument for his quiet heroism. No less improbable is the tradition of Savonarola adjuring the old Lorenzo on his death-bed to restore their liberty to the Florentines. Lorenzo could not very well restore what he had never deprived them of, and Savonarola knew politics too well to enact such an absurdity. Lorenzo was the Florentine Pericles, who held the first place in the republic by general consent; and if he had lived to finish his career he might have rivalled Pericles in fame, who was more distinguished in peace than war. All the Medici were fairly good men, with the exception of Alessandro, who was of doubtful extraction on both sides. There is scarcely a crime or an act of injustice attributed to any other member of the family, and they were, as a family, the most munificent and intelligent patrons of art that the world has seen. It would be an injustice to attribute sinister motives to them, or wanton ambition for power.

* Hillard's *Six Months in Italy*: an interesting and in many respects excellent book.

It is quite possible that the statue of Lorenzo the younger was a true portrait of the man, for that could be the only excuse why Michel Angelo should have created such an ill-favored object. He is adorned with a suit of Roman armor like that of *Augustus Cæsar* in the Vatican, but more highly ornamented. This, however, only makes his ill-shapen head, sharp visage, and long sinewy neck more conspicuous. He is reported to have been a brave soldier, but a man of intellect he could not have been. Yet his air of alertness is fine, and, taken as a portrait, we cannot but admire it. Though in no sense an ideal, it has a certain representative character, and the two statues together might pass for Action and Contemplation.

Unfortunately, it is also the first of Michel Angelo's works which suffers from mannerism. The muscles of Lorenzo's arms and chest are distended like those of a man who is swinging on a bar. Not even a pugilist in full training would have such an appearance while in a sitting posture. What he may have intended by this has never been explained.

Donatello, John of Bologna, Verrocchio, and other Italian sculptors of the fifteenth century are equal, if not superior, to their rivals of the brush and palette, but they do not attract nearly so much attention; and the reason for this is that their statues are too closely draped. If you ask a party of tourists who have just returned from their first visit to Italy what mediæval statues interested them, they will surely reply, besides the *Moses* and *Night* of Michel An-

gelo, Cellini's *Perseus* and John of Bologna's *Mercury*, both of which are entirely naked. The beauty of a statue is always more in the attitude than the expression of the face, and clothes interfere with this to a great degree. Michel Angelo fearlessly broke through the prudish conventionality of his predecessors, and it was thus that he accomplished such grand results. No one could make better clothes out of marble than he, but he always avoided them, if possible.

What comparison shall we make between Michel Angelo's sculpture and the finest Greek work?

He certainly brought to his subject a deeper philosophical consciousness, and a greatness of design, only equalled by Phidias and Lysippus; but in technical perfection, in the perfect command over framework and muscle, he falls short of the *Aphrodite of Melos*, and when we come to the work of Praxiteles a still deeper gulf yawns before us. For the art which is nature and the nature which is art, the modern world has nothing in sculpture which can compare for a moment with the *Hermes* of Olympia. In 1865 Grimm spoke of the *Aphrodite of Melos* as the noblest statue ever created by man, and yet the *Hermes* of Praxiteles surpasses it technically by several degrees. This is so evident that no one thinks of disputing the fact. The first principle of the Greek was to secure perfect symmetry of design; and to that end he struggled and fought with his subject until he obtained a pose which agreed with this condition. Symmetry, however, Michel Angelo cared for as little as he did for per-

sonal beauty; and though his statues are never ungainly or ill-proportioned, they lack that charm of figure which in the *Hermes*, the *Ares* of Lysippus, and many others seems almost to justify their existence of itself. Neither did Michel Angelo with all his study of anatomy, which often appears too much upon the surface, possess such a command of the external figure of man as the best Greek sculptors, who are not supposed to have been acquainted with anatomy in a scientific manner. They knew, however, where all the muscles lay and the effect that would be produced on them by different attitudes and movements. Michel Angelo also knew this, but it never seems to have become a second nature to him as it did to Scopas, Praxiteles, and Agesander. Whereas the paintings of the Sistine Chapel were accomplished with great facility, his statues bear evidence of having been wrought with labor and difficulty.

This difference between ancient and mediæval sculpture, which is to the advantage of the Greek, may be expressed by what we understand by the word *comeliness*. The statue of *Morning* has beauty of form, and the *Night* has a serious kind of grace, but they are not comely as the sculptured youths and maidens on the bas-reliefs of the Parthenon are comely. To have made them so might have interfered with Michel Angelo's design for these mighty creations; and yet it did not interfere with the majesty of *Pallas Athene*, or the grandeur of the Phidian *Zeus*. There is the same peculiarity in the hair of his *David*, beautiful as a wreath of vine

leaves; in the beard and arms of his *Moses*; and if there is an exception to this in his works it is the child *Jesus* at Bruges. It is even lacking in the kneeling *Cupid* at South Kensington, which was his earliest statue. Two artists may draw the same face so that it will excite our admiration, and yet one drawing may possess a pleasantness which the other does not. To imitate the Greek is impossible, and it would have been the last thing Michel Angelo would have thought of; but Cellini and John of Bologna approximated more closely to it. The influence of the monasteries on Italian art is just perceptible in Michel Angelo's work.

What he surpassed the sculptors of Hellas in was maturity of consciousness. The "Know thyself" of Socrates, enlarged under Christianity to the whole human race, was ripened to thorough self-knowledge, which is the basis of both Michel Angelo and Shakespeare. This gave them the superiority in elevation of thought, depth of feeling, and genuine power. Hellenic art is like a beautiful maiden unconsciously rejoicing in her purity and loveliness. The art of Michel Angelo has the charm and potency of a mature woman, who attracts us more by her feminine wisdom, wit, self-possession, and fine sympathies than from her personal appearance.

The effect of the Sistine Chapel is plainly visible in the Medici Chapel. Michel Angelo's statues become more and more pictorial. His *David*, for instance, can be looked at with advantage, and its action determined, from almost any point of view; and Raphael sketched it, by preference, from a po-

sition some thirty degrees behind the left shoulder; but the statues of *Night* and *Morning* can only be seen favorably while we are standing in front of them. The expression of the *Aurora*, particularly, can only be made out within a range of perhaps fifteen degrees from a certain point. *Il Penseroso* and the statue of *Lorenzo*, however, permit a much wider field of observation. In fact, Michel Angelo has here carried his attitudes to the very limit of the sculptor's art, and even, like Goethe in the second part of *Faust*, passed beyond them with success. While we admire his daring, we need not condemn his method, for the position of the statues against the wall renders them exempt from a wide range of observation. Not that they appear in any way defective, if viewed from all points of the compass, but it is only in front that they become quite intelligible to us. This is the reason why Ruskin complains that Michel Angelo used his chisel like a brush.

THE LAST JUDGMENT.

Michel Angelo lived through the reigns of a dozen or more popes, and yet among these only two, Julius II. and Paul III., can be said to have fully appreciated him. If it had not been for Julius and Paul the works of Michel Angelo might not be as scarce and widely scattered as those of Leonardo, but they would certainly have been diminished in extent; and we should have had no *Moses*, no *Sistine Chapel*, nor probably such a magnificent dome

on St. Peter's Church. The selection of a pope also depends on chances which are no more to be calculated than the appearance of a comet, and in the present case Paul obtained his appointment as cardinal through a scandalous intrigue of Alexander Borgia's, and his election to the papacy by a shameless deception.

Paul belonged to the Farnese family, and had long cherished the purpose of having a *Last Judgment* painted above the altar in the Sistine Chapel. Such a design does him great honor, though other proceedings during his pontifical career cover him with an equal degree of shame. He was one of those strange moral productions of the time, vibrating continually between elevated thoughts and the basest actions.

It was some centuries since the papal chair had proved a comfortable seat for a virtuous man. There had come to be a contradiction in the nature of the office which required a person of dubious character to correspond to it. The best of the cardinals rarely aspired to the position. Julius II. was an exception, but even of him we do not think with the same feeling that we do of Gustavus Adolphus or William the Silent. Paul III. was the typical pontiff of the century, much more than Julius or Leo; an able administrator, and magnificent patron of art, but crafty, avaricious, indulgent to his favorites, and wholly unscrupulous; a strange mixture of the epicure and Jesuit. Though not religious in his own nature, he respected religion, and wished to maintain the dignity of the Church.

When we speak of Italians with elevated interests and great conceptions leading immoral lives, it is the Romans chiefly that we refer to. They were, in fact, the same they always have been since the days of Catiline and Clodius. Whoever has read Cicero's oration for Aulus Cluentius, with its long catalogue of social enormities, will recognize its similarity to the life in Rome of the sixteenth century. The few touches which Dante gives us of it in the thirteenth century come to the same effect. In the carriages that drive to the Pamphili gardens you may still notice faces that will horrify you, as we are horrified at the marble busts of Agrippina, Vitellius, and Caracalla at the Capitol. In all countries there are people who lead a double life, who are full of noble sentiments, and commit base actions, but nowhere does this take place on the grand scale as formerly in Rome.

Michel Angelo was now sixty years of age. A strong man is in his prime at fifty, and at sixty his vigor will not be very much diminished; and yet we cannot expect of him to possess the freshness and spontaneity of youth. Our best American critic said in apology for Froude's *Life of Carlyle*, that it rarely happened that the style of a writer was so good at sixty, as it might have been ten years earlier. Habit, which is the safeguard of old age, is also its weakness, tending always to a mechanical mode of thought and action. Of the other Italian masters Titian painted some great pictures late in life, but, with one exception, they were destroyed by fire, and those by which he is generally known were pro-

duced before he was forty-five. Tintoretto's *Paradise*, painted after he was seventy, cannot, however, be surpassed for freshness, vigor, and originality. Michel Angelo's *Last Judgment* is also a *chef-d'œuvre* of the highest class, in spite of some deficiencies, and perhaps the greater of the two.

Every one knows the torso of *Hercules* in the centre of the Belvedere, which has been called Michel Angelo's master. In point of workmanship it is scarcely inferior to the *Venus dei Medici*, and belongs to the same class of statues as the *Apollo Belvedere* and the *Laocoön*; not the purest Hellenic art, and yet like the plays of Euripides it contains a prophecy of the modern world. It has the sort of self-consciousness of a school-boy who knows he is making a good declamation. We have already noticed Michel Angelo's predilection for massive figures; and he had himself a herculean mind. We can readily believe that this torso attracted him strongly. He was always studying anatomy, and for that purpose it was almost equal to a human body. Its influence on his drawing in the *Last Judgment* is undeniable; and it may possibly account for the unnatural muscularity in his statue of *Lorenzo*. Besides this mannerism of the pencil there is also a business-like way of shading the figures in portions of the *Last Judgment*, which betrays mannerism of the brush. Sometimes these two are found together, as in the figure of *St. Bartholomew*, and in other places they appear separately. They need not, however, disturb our enjoyment of the picture, which is simply a grand composition. The lack of

comeliness in it can hardly be considered a fault, any more than the lack of elegance in some of Shakspeare's plays.

I once saw a flock of sea-birds so large that they obscured the sun, which was then about an hour from setting. If we imagine an early spring morning, when we think the sun has been obscured by clouds, and find instead of clouds or sea-birds, that it is a vast congregation of human figures, we shall realize the effect which I think Michel Angelo intended to produce here. How far he succeeded in this it is now impossible to know, for the lower portion has been badly smoked with candles and frankincense, and the whole coloring has become dull and dingy. Michel Angelo was never a master of *chiaroscuro*; and yet when the colors were new and fresh, and harmonized with the ultramarine which is now so discordant, the effect must have been much more vivid and nearer to an illusion. The Saviour and many others about him are seated or standing on clouds, and the light comes from beneath, where the earth is represented by an irregular ledge, as in the *Creation of Adam*. The general effect now is like a storm-tossed sea of men and women in every possible or conceivable attitude.

The effect of the painting as a whole is different from that which results from a study of its separate parts. Many of the figures taken by themselves are ungainly in appearance and grotesque in attitude, but at the same time they serve to prevent a too monotonous and regimental aspect in the assembled multitude. The grouping is very remarkable, for it repudiates all suspicion of preconceived design; and

those who have attempted to plant trees so that they will seem to have grown up naturally know that this is not an easy matter.

The more incredible an event might be the better the mediæval Christians liked to believe in it. The early founders of Christianity were not prudent in this respect, for what is accepted dogmatically, even for centuries, is sure to be questioned at last, and then if it is not found to be logical it vitiates with suspicion whatever is directly connected with it. A belief in the immortality of the soul necessitates an immediate judgment in every human being after death. If this judgment is divinely just it must also be irrevocable. Why therefore should there be another judgment at a later time, for which souls are summoned even from Heaven, and compelled to rehabilitate themselves in their ancient bodies, which have long since disappeared and been transformed through a hundred chemical processes. It might happen in this way that parts of the same body had come into the possession of different individuals. A knowledge of the physical sciences is not required to reason this out, but that did not occur to the Alexandrian doctors. They satisfied themselves, as Dante tells us we should be satisfied, and not trouble ourselves too much about what we cannot understand.

We wonder what Paul III. and his wicked old cardinals thought of the matter; what sensations they had when they first ranged themselves before Michel Angelo's awful picture, and if they really feared that they might be called to account some



LAST JUDGMENT, BY MICHELANGELO

Sistine Chapel

time in that manner. Did Michel Angelo himself believe in it? and what were his reflections on religion and immortality during the seven long years that he spent on this work? That would be worth knowing if we could only discover it; but he went his way in silence, and the grave does not give up its secrets. It evidently seemed veritable to his imagination.

The wall being a parallelogram has two *loci* or centres, and in the upper one Christ is seated on a cloudy throne, contrasted from all other figures by his majesty and power. The light seems to come through the cloud behind him, as if the sun were hidden there. This effect is not so decided as it might have been, and probably was formerly, but there can be little doubt of it, for the light breaks out above under the two round arches, and also at the extreme right, exposing a group of figures of the elect in the strangest attitudes. A choir of angels sounding the clang of doom with long slender trumpets occupy very nearly the lower centre; a group as animated as that of the bathers in the cartoon of the Palazzo Vecchio. One of them is resounding in the ear of a sinner who is falling from above.

Realism itself is put to shame on the left side, where the graves are yawning, and skeletons sitting up seeking for their dissipated flesh. One of them, who may be intended for Orpheus, has already seized a lyre, although his bones are not yet covered. Others lie on the ground in a lethargic condition, not able as yet to disengage themselves from mortality.

As you will see a flock of birds rise from a field

and after wheeling in the air settle upon a tree, so the resuscitated bodies go upward in a mighty course, and after circling about light on the clouds on either side of the judgment-seat. This movement carries them out of the picture on the left hand, but they reappear above in great numbers. The ascending movement is unmistakable: they do not look like falling bodies. Some go up in a slanting position as if their feet were lighter than their heads. Others are being assisted by angels, and others still cling to those next them as people do when they are afraid of falling. Never before did Michel Angelo reap such a harvest of interesting attitudes.

Every age and condition of life is represented here. There is no distinction of place or rank; for the lack of clothing reduces all to the same level. Those on Christ's right hand (the spectator's left) would seem to be waiting their turn for judgment, while the group on Christ's left, in which there is a number of well-known saints, evidently contains those who have received a favorable verdict. In the two round arches above angels carry aloft the cross, the column, the scourge, and crown of thorns. They cling to these instruments of the martyrdom with a tender and loving devotion, rejoicing in their holy association. Their faces are full of rapture and earnestness. They are not so beautiful as Tintoretto's angels, but have a nobler and more masculine expression. They are boldly drawn, and yet with much dignity. The marble column seems so heavy and solid that we are apprehensive lest it fall on the heads of those below.

Michel Angelo, like Professor Agassiz, evidently considered the wings of an angel as an anatomical absurdity.

There is no fall of the damned like that in Rubens's magnificent picture at Munich; but below the assembly of the elect there are seven personages, representing the seven cardinal sins, being dragged down by demons with cloven feet and urged downward by angels from above. In the lower right-hand corner is seen the river Styx, and Charon with a boat-load of sinners, whom he is landing on that joyless shore whence hope departs forever. Demons with rams' horns and very large teeth assist Charon in emptying the boat, while Minos, the infernal judge, in the likeness of the unfortunate Biagio da Cesena, stands grinning to receive them.

The attitude of the Saviour is a conventional one, and is supposed to have been taken from the *Last Judgment* at Orvieto by Fra Angelico. The use of a conventional form by Michel Angelo was like pouring "new wine into old bottles," and here he has infused such life and energy into the figure as often leads to a misunderstanding of the action personified. The right hand upraised to show the print of the nail has been mistaken for a gesture of wrathful condemnation, and his left arm pointing to the wound in his side suggests a motion as if to repel the anxious spirits who crowd around him.

That the attitude might be interpreted in this manner is not to be doubted, but a glance at the face of Christ dispels the illusion. He has not the aspect of an angry judge, but of calm, dispassionate

majesty, and his face is turned with royal recognition to the group of disciples and martyrs who press eagerly toward him as if they were saying, "Behold, Lord, it is we who salute Thee"; and Christ replies, "You see also by these tokens that it is I." This is the more elevated explanation, and more after the manner of Michel Angelo. Although the most notable of reformers in art, he could not always escape from conventionality.

If he adopted the attitude of Angelico's Saviour, the face and figure are at least his own, and no artist since has dared to imitate them.

The prevailing types of the Saviour, at the present time, do not vary so widely but that we readily discover who they are intended for, without even a halo or a crown of thorns. In the sixteenth century it was quite otherwise. The Christ in Titian's *Tribute Money*, that in Raphael's *Transfiguration*, and the one in Michel Angelo's *Pietà* could not well be classed together. Superior to all of them is the glorious head of Christ in Leonardo's *Last Supper*, as we know it from his studies and Morghen's engraving; but that half-feminine, spiritually submissive, and sympathetically suffering face would hardly serve for the enthroned Messiah in the judgment-seat of Heaven. At least Michel Angelo thought so, and the result has justified his opinion.

His Saviour vies in figure with both Hercules and Apollo. It is slightly mannered and may be considered too muscular, but it is a magnificent conception. The head is the noblest ever imagined by artist, ancient or modern; a Napoleonic face crowned

by a wreath of hair in graceful and luxuriant festoons, almost like a wreath of vine leaves, and an expression in which all passion and suffering have been subdued to a majestic calmness,—not the calmness of indifference, but of eternal love. “Nothing,” said an eminent thinker and theological scholar, “ever gave me such an insight into the mind of Michel Angelo as the Christ in his *Last Judgment*. I know from that what kind of a man he was.” Omniscient in wisdom he judges the multitude assembled before him, and by an effort of the will assigns his place to each. The Olympian Zeus seems weak in comparison with him.

The figure of the Virgin looks slight beside her mighty son, and her face seems rather narrow, but that is owing to the turn of her head, and the way in which her kerchief is tied over it. It is a more feminine face than the Delphic, as beautiful as the Libyan sibyl; a face very tenderly human, and of one too long acquainted with sorrow to exult in the hour of triumph. She is looking down at the swarm of resurrected souls, and shrinking back in a human and natural manner from their near approach.

Not far from Christ, on his right hand, there is a huge, ungainly figure with pointed nose and beard, his eye rolled up at the Saviour with awe and expectation; behind him is a woman seizing his arm as if to draw him out of the way. He is almost too realistic for a sacred picture, and who he can be intended for, unless St. Christopher, I cannot imagine, but the greatest writers also introduce such unpleasant characters in their works. He may have a favora-

ble effect on the whole composition, but he is not required for contrast.

The *St. Christopher* of Jan Van Eyck in Berlin would appear to advantage in its place.

Just at the feet of the Virgin there is a plain-looking fellow with a short ladder in his hand ; his dull expression and narrow brow nevertheless bespeak courage and fidelity. We suppose that he is the Roman soldier who offered Christ the sponge of vinegar.

The group of saints and apostles on the Saviour's left have not a decidedly saintly aspect, but look much more like strong men of affairs. Michel Angelo may have been near the mark in this, for if Luther and Servetus had been painted among them they would not have appeared out of keeping with the rest. St. Bartholomew sitting astride of a small cloud at Christ's feet looks as if he might have once been an Archbishop of Canterbury. St. Peter is conspicuous before all others ; a great figure and powerful head, to balance St. Christopher on the other side, but much more interesting. Close beside him there is another noble head, more thoughtful and refined, which Michel Angelo's Scotch biographer thinks must be St. Andrew, but it is evidently intended for St. John the Evangelist. Above these two, holding out his hand in a gesture of admiration, is an ideal face of Roman type which must be intended for St. Paul. He has the grace and charm of an orator, expressed in form. Below, St. Catherine is seen with a section of her wheel, St. Simeon Gelotes with his saw, and St. Sebastian with his fist full of arrows. Here the postures become more and

more original, and all that one can say is that saints have a genius for remarkable attitudes. Yet their positions are easy, if not graceful, and they do not appear theatrical or affected.

Above this group an assemblage of the elect stretches far away out of the picture. Here we feel indeed the reality of Paradise, and can say, with truth, "Blessed are the pure in heart." The principal light falls on the figure of a woman whose face is not beautiful according to the classic standard, but she is like that character in Dickens's Christmas story who made people happy wherever she went. On one side of her a wife hastens to kiss the husband whom she lost so very young; and on the other Damon and Pythias fall into each other's arms. A noble, philosophic head, much like Fra Angelico's *St. Paul*, is listening to the earnest discussion of a young man too much concealed for our recognition. Perhaps this is intended for Plato, for, as Dante says, the Saviour took many with him when he went to the Inferno after his crucifixion.* Nearly in front are two servant girls painted to the life, who are looking at Christ with such expressions of astonishment as are customary with persons of their class. Beyond and above the line of heads a pair of hands is raised in prayer; and near by a leper, or some unfortunate creature to whom life on earth has been a curse, is timidly raising his eyes to see whether he is really in Paradise or not. In the arch above two

* Though Dante also mentions meeting Plato in the first circle of Hades, Michel Angelo would not hesitate to resurrect him if he thought Plato deserving of it.

childlike figures are flying so close to each other as to seem almost like one person. I think they may be intended for Francesca da Rimini and her lover; for it says in the *Inferno*, that their condition after the judgment shall be better than before.

When we reach the top of a mountain we like to recognize those objects on the horizon with which we are acquainted; and so it is in studying the characters of a great historical painting. We recognize them as if they were old friends.

Charon's boat-load and the Seven Cardinal Sins are the best painted portion of this immense work, and are so represented as not to be especially repulsive.

Some of the cardinal sinners are descending head first, and others turning over and over in an inextricable whirl of bodies and limbs, with the demons who are clutching them. The one nearest the Saviour is being dragged by her feet and has covered one eye with her hand, and her face has such a woe-begone expression as no actor could excel upon the stage. Anger is the first cardinal sin, and this may have been some woman who brought about great misfortunes by her bad temper. Another is seen falling at quite a distance with a most lifelike expression of hopeless dismay.

With Charon's boat we come upon Dante's ground, and find that Michel Angelo has adhered closely to the legends of the poet. In the third canto he says: "Charon the demon, with eyes of glowing coal beckoning the shades, collects them all; smites with his oar whoever lingers." He does indeed smite

them as if he would reduce them to powder. He is a world-terrible demon, and is the first object that attracts attention on entering the chapel. His eyes are lurid; and his lips are leather. Those in the front of the boat are forced out of it by the others pushing behind. They are seized and hurried off by demons. A demon with wings (the only instance of this anomaly) and with a skull like an iron pot, is flying off with a sinner on his back. Here we have every example of turpitude, not too forcibly expressed. We recognize the bad companions whom we could not escape from at school and in college, and who have long since disappeared in the state prison or other congenial abode. The foremost one is a young city fop, with banged hair, such as one might have seen a few years since on Fifth Avenue or the Boulevards.

During the middle of the last century when English travellers were obliged to purchase their own carriages at Calais to cross the continent in, some marvellous tales were brought back from Rome and Venice, and among them that Michel Angelo had painted the portrait of a cardinal of dissolute life in his *Last Judgment*, and represented him in the coils of a huge serpent; that the cardinal had appealed to the pope for redress, and that the pope considered it too good a joke to be interfered with. This anecdote is referred to by Sterne in *Tristram Shandy*, and on my first visit to Rome I heard it myself from persons who had recently visited the Sistine Chapel. The true explanation of it may be found in the fifth canto of the *Inferno*, where Dante says:

"There Minos sits horrific, and grins ; examines the crimes upon their entrance ; judges, and sends according as he girds himself. I say that when the ill-born spirit comes before him, it confesses all ; and that sin-discerner sees what place in hell is for it, and with his tail makes as many circles round himself as the degrees he will have it to descend." *

It is the tail of Satan's judge that has been mistaken for the folds of a serpent, but the least accuracy of observation would have discovered from his pointed ears that he was a demon and not a sinner. Minos, it will be observed, was part of the Hellenic element introduced into Catholic Christianity. In the present instance his tail is wrapped twice about him to show that the city fop is destined for the circle of carnal sinners ; which is what we would expect. It was Biagio da Cesena, the master of ceremonies, whose physiognomy Michel Angelo introduced here, because he condemned the *Last Judgment* as an indecent painting.

In this vast composition there is nothing accidental, nothing superfluous. It is a mighty cataract, a Niagara of pictorial ideas, and almost overwhelms the observer. Measure it we cannot, and after studying it we leave the Vatican as much fatigued as if we had walked the circuit of Rome under the walls of Aurelian and Honorius.

THE PAOLINA.

Few persons enter this musty old chamber which contains Michel Angelo's two last paintings, the *Con-*

* Dr. John Carlyle's translation.

version of St. Paul and the Martyrdom of St. Peter. They were magnificent subjects for him, and we can only regret that they were not consigned to him earlier in life. They were painted when he was over seventy, and his advanced age is supposed to have occasioned the extreme severity of their treatment. Michel Angelo never smiled; but here he approaches nearly to the lugubrious. The concourse of heavenly spirits, which is gathered above the riderless horse of St. Paul, reminds one of the speech of Fabius Maximus: "Let us leave to the Tarentines their angry deities." Yet they deserve more consideration than they often receive, even from the admirers of Buonarotti; although they do not add much to our previous knowledge of him.

MOSES.

The Esquiline Hill is one of the seven hills of ancient Rome which were all included within the walls of Servius Tullius. It is still the oldest portion of the city, for there may be seen, cropping out in places, the diamond-patterned brickwork of the Roman republic, which was removed from the greater portion of Rome by the improvements of Augustus and the conflagration which happened in Nero's reign. After we have passed the palace of the Quirinal and the Rospigliosi, the houses become continually smaller, meaner, and more dilapidated, and their inhabitants more unkempt and banditti-like; until at length we see the stupendous wall of the Coliseum looming up in the valley beneath us, and know that we have reached the limit which

divides the city of to-day from the ruins of the past. There, just at the top of the Esquiline, is a small, antiquated church in the basilica style, plain enough without, but beautiful within, from the simple stateliness of its two rows of gray marble columns; and on the right hand, just before we reach the altar, suddenly, with astonishment, we come upon the *Moses* of Michel Angelo. Of all works of art this produces the strongest impression, and although we may try to resist it, and disparage and condemn it, we cannot help feeling the effect of it. It is superhuman; and if no such personage existed in primitive ages he is at least in accordance with our ideas of that time, and we are confident that such a man might have been. He is so much alive that the statues in the Vatican seem spellbound in comparison.

As we gaze on it all the wonders of the world are suggested to us. The grandest events in history float before the mind. We think not only of the Pyramids and Mount Horeb, but of Salamis, Socrates in his cell, Hannibal crossing the Alps, the Roman law, the victory of Constantine, Strasburg Cathedral, the death of Gustavus, Rossbach, and Washington at Valley Forge. For all heroes and heroism are akin to this eldest of heroes, whose laws were the foundation of all law, and whose influence is as keenly felt to-day as Shakspeare's or Luther's.

This is what Michel Angelo desired to represent. The *David* was the youthful hero, wrought in his own youth; *Moses*, the mature hero of his later years. He was forty years at work upon this statue,

and though he was blamed in his own time, and even now by some writers, for not keeping his contract with the Duke of Urbino with regard to it, we may rest assured that it was not from indifference that he neglected the work, but because the inspiration did not come to him,—that is, he did not see his way clearly how to finish it. Neither should we blame him for his unwillingness to relinquish an undertaking in which he felt so profound an interest. He could have well afforded to return the ten thousand florins which had been paid him in advance; but in that case we should never have had the *Moses*, nor Julius II. a worthy monument. On the whole, Michel Angelo seems to have acted in this matter like an honest and sensible man, who considers the interest of his patrons better than they know it themselves. He was, beside, continually interrupted by the commissions of different popes, who looked on the genius of Michel Angelo as part of the papal inheritance.

Here we stand before the primeval man; and if we penetrate to Michel Angelo's radical conception of the subject we shall find it based on a solid foundation. Moses is the earliest authentic *character* in history, and he lived in an age when only physical force was respected, or moral force when it was supported by physical. Yet, morally and intellectually, he was the peer of Schiller and Emerson, or even their superior. The early Hebrews were not like those savage tribes that now encumber the earth, and among whom there is no civilizing progress. Neither was Moses like the Sultan of Turkey,

who has some external cultivation but is a barbarian at heart. Now is not this the idea which Michel Angelo has attempted to express ? We have a face of the noblest intelligence united with the highest degree of physical force.

Yet we do not trace the influence here of the *torso* in the *Belvedere*. It is no statue of Hercules, but a wholly different form of strength. Moses led the Hebrews through the Red Sea and across the deserts of Syria. He was a great pedestrian ; and his lower limbs, like those of the Alpine climbers in our own day, were developed somewhat at the expense of the rest of his physique. The same may be noticed in the graceful statue of a runner scraping his arm with the strigil, which is in the first *camera* of statuary in the Vatican. It has been complained that the calf of the leg of Moses is nearly as large as his head ; but if this be an exaggeration, it is only a slight one, as any one who visits Chamounix in summer will readily discover. A statue in a sitting posture requires that the limbs should be developed to the full limit to prevent their looking insignificant. It was customary among painters to draw their seated figures somewhat longer in proportion than those who were standing about them. So, also, the arms of Moses are not like those of an athlete, but have a style of their own, which is repeated again in the folds of the mantle thrown across his lap. The erectness of his head, the power of his eye, the firm position of the feet, and resolute air indicate the lawgiver and shepherd of his people.

It says in Exodus, chap. xxxiv., that when Moses descended from Mount Sinai with the tables of the law, his face shone so brightly that the children of Israel were afraid of him, and he was obliged to put on a veil before they would come near him again. We, too, have seen men whose faces were illuminated after communing with the Lord, but not to the same extent. A curious piece of mediæval mythology arose from this circumstance. In Exodus, chap. xxxiv., the Hebrew word *qaran*, which meant originally horned or pointed (and it is uncertain which was the earlier use of it), came afterwards to be applied to the darting beams of light at sunrise and sunset, and so finally to mean radiant or shining, and was translated by St. Jerome in the Vulgate, or Latin Catholic Bible, as *cornuta*; so that the 29th and 30th verses ran thus: 29. "When Moses came down from Mount Sinai he held the two tables of the law, and knew not that his face was horned" *; 30. "Aaron and the Children of Israel, looking on the face of Moses, saw that it was horned and feared to approach him." †

Moses was accordingly represented in this manner, even in the time of Tintoretto's *Paradise*; though it would seem as if a suspicion of its incorrectness had already taken root in the fifteenth century, for the Moses in Fra Angelico's *Trans-*

* 29. Cumque descenderet Moyses de monte Sinai, tenebat duas tabulas testimonii et ignorabat quod *cornuta* esset *facies* sua ex consortio sermonis domini.

† 30. Videntes autem Aaron et filii Israel *cornutam* Moysi *faciem* timuerunt prope accedere.

figuration has something above his ears very much like painters' brushes, more likely to have been intended for rays of light than for solid horns. Tintoretto has represented him in the same manner. Michel Angelo could not, of course, represent this in marble, and therefore returned to the earlier tradition. In this case the horns have had a determining effect on the whole physiognomy, and it may be suspected that Michel Angelo moulded the features of his Moses from an unconscious recollection of some Greek divinity with horns, probably a statue or bust of the god Pan. It is this that gives a slightly faun-like expression to the countenance, noticeable in the full sensuous lips and the contour of the eyebrows.

The beard of Moses is the one enigma of Christian art. Such long silky curls might have grown on the head of a woman, but never on the face of a man. Vasari praises the softness and fineness of the hair, but neither he nor Grimm makes any attempt to solve the mystery. Was it some strange imagination which came upon the artist and took possession of him like a prophetic rapture? There are Roman representations of Jupiter with a beard divided into thirteen curls or ringlets, and this has an artificial appearance, and is not much like the natural growth on the chin of Moses. Here Michel Angelo has certainly surpassed himself in boldness and originality.

The hair on his head is not less remarkable for its fineness and the gracefully vigorous disposition of its locks. It is only in the Moses that Michel An-



"MOSES," BY MICHELANGELO

In Church of S. Pietro in Vincolo, Rome

gelo has equalled the finest Greek treatment of hair. Notice especially its arrangement about the right ear, and where it comes in contact with the beard. This of itself is a marvel of artistic skill. So this artist, who disliked to make use of clothes, could be the most admirable of tailors when the occasion required. The way in which he has wrought the sandals and leggings is inimitable; yet he could only approach and not equal the drapery of the *Hermes* of Praxiteles. What firmness there is in that marble knee; and his right foot planted on the ground as if an earthquake could not move it !

All else yields, however, to the expression of the face, which is radiant with moral power. Moses has descended from the mount with the tables of the law in his hand, and sees before him the procession of the Golden Calf. The unknown writer of Exodus says " he waxed hot with wrath," and this is the moment which Michel Angelo has chosen for his statue. Yet it is not any conventional type of indignation, but one sublimated by religious enthusiasm. The difficulty of giving a work in marble a decided facial expression is well known. That of the *Hermes* and of the *Ares Ludovisi* and a few others are exceptional among antiques; but here we have one that could not have been excelled on canvas by Titian or Raphael.

To him who has been forty years in the wilderness, or even ten or twelve, the *Moses* of Michel Angelo is a consolation beyond all speech; and I envy not any one, either as a man or an artist, who

can stand before it now and talk of the weakness of exaggeration.

ARCHITECTURE.

It is a mistake to suppose that Michel Angelo was the originator of Roman Renaissance, though he gave it the most complete development, and it deserves to be associated with his name. He paid little attention to architecture until after middle life, and his first work, the sacristy of San Lorenzo at Florence has never been greatly admired. The Farnese palace at Rome was begun by San Gallo and completed by Michel Angelo with slight deviation from the former's plans. His two principal works in this line are, therefore, the dome of St. Peter's Church, and the Capitol (on the same spot where Cæsar was assassinated), with the two palaces on either side of it. If the origination of Roman Renaissance belongs to any one man, it is Bramante, who was older than Michel Angelo, and set his mark on St. Peter's while the latter was chiselling on the statue of *David*.

Michel Angelo's architecture is chaste, dignified, and impressive, but also somewhat dry and uninviting. This last quality is not to be laid to his charge, but to the time in which he lived. The revival of classic forms in architecture was a great advantage, but it brought with it the conventional Greek and Roman ornamentation to the exclusion of the more vital and diversified mediæval forms. The charm of Greek and Roman architecture con-

sists in its fine proportions and simplicity, which were suited to that time, but when we apply the same principles to the more elaborate conditions of modern life, they are not always sufficient to cover the subject. It is like the difference between sculpture and painting. That color and the imitation of natural forms, after having once been introduced into architecture, should have been excluded from it again, was like returning to the mask and cothurnus of the ancient actor. If Shakspeare had prescribed for his plays the law of the four dramatic unities, he could not have done himself a more serious injury than the builder who limits himself to the five orders of architecture. The world had already seen enough of triglyphs, Ionic volutes, and fluted pilasters; and people came to that conclusion not long after Michel Angelo's death.

It is partly for this reason and partly because it has been so extensively imitated that his architecture seems to lack originality. When we stand on the Capitoline Hill beside the equestrian statue of *Marcus Aurelius*, we are reminded of Trafalgar Square in London. The woodwork in the hall of the Grand Council at Venice is evidently imitated from the Medici Chapel at Florence; and the imaginary architecture painted on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel has been developed to noble proportions in the hall of a railway depot at Boston.

The library of San Lorenzo long remained unfinished from the hope of the Medici family that Michel Angelo would return to Florence and complete his work there. At length, being pressed for

an explanation of his plans in regard to it, Michel Angelo wrote to Vasari as follows:

“ There is a certain stair that comes into my thoughts like a dream; but I do not think it is exactly the one which I had planned at that time, seeing that it appears to be but a clumsy affair; I will describe it for you here nevertheless. I took a number of oval boxes, each about one palm deep, but not of equal length and breadth. The first and largest I placed on the pavement at such distance from the wall of the door, as seemed to be required by the greater or lesser degree of steepness you may wish to give to the stair. Over this was placed another, smaller in all directions, and leaving sufficient room on that beneath for the foot to rest on in ascending, thus diminishing each step as it gradually retires towards the door; the uppermost step being exactly of the width required for the door itself. This part of the oval steps must have two wings, one right, the other left. The steps of the wings to rise by similar degrees, but not to be oval in form.”

These are the words of Michel Angelo; and how close they bring us to him and his methods of thinking. His plan in this instance was not adopted, but such staircases are now to be seen in all parts of the world.

It was as appropriate that Michel Angelo should design the dome of St. Peter's as that Napoleon should make an end of the French Revolution. It is not only the largest of all domes, but also the most elegant. Michel Angelo might declare that he was unable to surpass the work of Brunelleschi,

but the dome of the cathedral in Florence seems almost rude and antiquated compared with St. Peter's dome. The difficulty is to find a suitable point from which to view it. The dome of St. Paul's, seen from Temple Bar or Aldersgate Street, looms up grandly through the London fog, and the dome of La Salute in Venice, an inferior work in itself, owes much to its fortunate position; but you may drive from the Piazza Spagna to St. Peter's Church without seeing hardly a glimpse of its dome at all, so narrow are the streets and lofty the intermediate buildings. The Pincion Hill is too far away from it for us to fully realize its size, and the view of that side of the church is much injured by the proximity of the Vatican, — a huge, amorphous building, whose sole artistic merit is the beautiful yellow travertine of which it is constructed. The best places to see it are from the vicinity of the Doria Pamphili gardens, and from near Wordsworth's stone pine; but it is also worth the effort to climb to the roof of the church, where the fine proportions of the dome, the cornice, and its mouldings can be studied to advantage. Many years ago a frail and spirituelle American lady was wont to ascend to the roof of St. Peter's several times every winter, as she said, to behold the work of Michel Angelo.

The interior effect is not so impressive as it might have been if this world-genius could have lived to complete the whole building. In fact, the ornamentation of the façade of St. Peter's would seem to have been calculated to make the church look as

small as possible. It is not to be compared with the simple grandeur of the Pantheon, which after nineteen centuries still continues to be the noblest piece of architecture that Rome contains.

The Piazza del Popolo is as homelike and interesting as the Piazza of St. Peter's is dreary and grandiose. The Egyptian lions spouting water in the centre of the square, with the donkeys drinking at the fountain; the ox-teams, with their picturesque drivers; the pretty contadinas; the orange-woman with her golden hoard; the gracefully terraced ascent to the Pincion; the dignified entrance to the Corso; and the gate of Michel Angelo with its twin churches on either side,—what is the elegance of Paris or Vienna compared with such a picture as that?

Michel Angelo designed the Porta del Popolo and it has his massive strength and originality, but it would not attract much attention without the distinction of his name. While it is appropriate to its surroundings and faultless in detail, it lacks something essential to give it a charm, and we feel that Michel Angelo might have imagined a better design. It cannot be compared with San Michele's marble gate at Verona, and the old turreted gate by the pyramid of *Cestius* is more impressive,—perhaps on account of its warlike character. The two yellow travertine churches are not gems of architecture, but their proportions are admirable and they deserve to be remembered.

Drive through the Corso and observe the palaces on either side: then stand in the quadrangle of the

Capitol and consider if any of them surpass the work of Michel Angelo. The Farnese Palace may and perhaps others. The Barberini certainly excites more admiration; and so do the Strozzi and Pitti in Florence. It was a bold architect, and a successful one, who designed the Pitti Palace. I think the front of the Doge's Palace, with its glorious staircase, surpasses them all. The two palaces on the Capitoline have nothing like its beauty; but of this we may be assured, that they will never *grow old* and out of style, and if we could return to Rome fifteen hundred years hence we should like them as well as we do now. It is their universality which makes them admirable.

We wonder also if it was Michel Angelo's design that placed the statue of *Aurelius* there, and if he knew what sort of a man Aurelius was. Thus do the really great shake hands across the centuries; sometimes without knowing whose palm it is they grasp.

“ Ever the wise of all ages and nations
Nod to each other, and smile, and agree.”

All the great virtues, such as sincerity, fidelity, chastity, forbearance, and self-devotion, as well as some smaller ones, may be learned of Michel Angelo, but especially this,—in what manner attitude is explanatory of character. A skilful diplomat will detect the insincerity of his opponent by the inclination of the head, or some movement of the hands, while the face is composed to an open and innocent expression. Much more important is it

to be able to recognize true greatness when we chance to meet with it, and distinguish it from that false coinage of pretension which circulates so readily in this heedless world. To recognize the hero and prophet when they come ; to learn to distinguish the *man* through the disguises of gentleman or peasant, —that is the lesson which Michel Angelo has left to us to study.

THE EVOLUTION OF RAPHAEL

IT would seem as if Nature, dissatisfied with the caprice of Leonardo and the wilfulness of Michel Angelo, wished to try her hand again, and moulded an image in some respects superior to either.

Few travellers visit the city of Raphael's birth, and yet there is no more enchanting portion of Italy. It is a peaceful country, and the clouds drift lazily across the sky, casting shadows upon the low Umbrian mountains as they did when Tityrus reclined under the spreading beech, and tuned his slender pipe for a serenade to the gentle Amaryllis. The hills seem to sleep in the sunshine, and man is so contented that he thinks not of life or death. One would suppose that in his youth Raphael had drunk in the aspect of this country until he became the living expression of its tranquillity and repose.

If character predominated in Michel Angelo, and intellect in Leonardo, temperament was the cornerstone of Raphael's nature. His disposition was so pleasant that it captivated every one that came near him, as we sometimes notice among women who

nevertheless are not remarkable for their beauty. Such attractive persons tread a dangerous path, until experience has instructed them to avoid the allurements of their fellow-mortals; but Raphael was not more amiable than generous and self-forgetful. He had that true disposition of the poet which "loves another's song more than its own singing." Admiration and flattery might rumble round his ears but they never touched his heart. In his master's studio at Perugia, in the most distinguished society of Florence, and in the noontide splendor of the papal court, Raphael was always the same modest, unpretending, and self-possessed person. This was a quality which neither self-denial nor self-control could have given him. It must be born in a man once for all.

Susceptible as an artist always must be, he seemed to possess a talisman to distinguish those influences which were beneficial from those which were injurious. Impassioned and ardent as few men have ever been, he always loved with moderation and selected his friends with good judgment. He loved his art so well that even the most refined pleasures could not distract him from it; neither was he so ambitious as to endanger his health by over-exertion. His moral nature was so finely balanced that ambition and duty were almost the same to him. Michel Angelo may be said to have lived in his work; but Raphael both lived in it and out of it, and was all the better for this,—more human, tender, and sympathetic.

He was slender, fragile-looking, and half-feminine,



MADONNA WITH THE BOOK (DIOTALEVI MADONNA)
BY RAPHAEL
Berlin Museum

but never effeminate, and with plenty of masculine good sense. It is doubtful if a more sensible person ever existed. His tact was genius in itself. Women live by tact, and when they are obliged to reason they are generally found at fault; while with men it is just the reverse. It often happens that men who possess a great deal of tact are indecisive and lack good judgment in important affairs. But Raphael was equally judicious in small matters and the greatest. He seemed to be infallible, and his tact and judgment were so welded together that it was difficult to say where one ended and the other began. Few men so great as he have been so nearly faultless.

The feminine element in him may, on the whole, be considered an advantage. No poets, except Shakspeare and Goethe, have penetrated so deeply into the nature of woman and the mystery of her being; nor have any succeeded so well in reproducing externally her internal life. This has made him precious to the whole sex. His features in early manhood were decidedly feminine, although they afterwards grew stronger; and it is safe to presume that he possessed the same grace of personal charm which he transferred so easily to his pictures. Unlike all other great artists of his time, he never wore a beard, and if the portrait of him in the Louvre is to be trusted, a beard would not have been becoming to him.

It would seem as if he required no self-control, for his inclination was so closely in accord with universal law that he felt no temptation to depart from the normal course of things. He reminds us of what

an English poet has said of Shakspeare: "Others abide our question; thou alone art free"; and this freedom also gave him great power over others.

In less than twelve years this innocent country had acquired an influence equal to any pope or emperor. Everything in Rome, outside of the papal government, came under his authority; painting, architecture, the excavation of ruins, city improvements, —even fashionable society. Nothing was done without consulting Raphael, and his death left a void in Italy that was never filled again. His course in life may be compared to a mountain stream, pure and sparkling, which, uniting others to itself, descends to the plain by daring leaps, and there, continually increasing in volume, rolls on to the sea, carrying the largest vessels on its surface.

In addition to all this, we must admit that he possessed an intellect of the first magnitude. It was not an intellect like Leonardo's, who anticipated Bacon's discovery, and who might, under different influences, have equalled Bacon in law and philosophy. Raphael's intellect was not of the scientific order. Like a true artist, he perceived ideas not abstractedly, but in *form*, and saw things always in their relation to one another, and harmoniously arranged. To recognize the true quality of maternal love shows finer skill than to comprehend the most ingenious machine, or to solve the most difficult problem. In the frescos of the Vatican and his cartoons for the tapestries, he shows an appreciation of history, philosophy, and religion fully equal to Milton and Dante. The intellectual char-

acter of his paintings, even when he represents an epileptic boy, is strongly marked; and the beings he called into existence would seem to belong to a better world than the one we inherit. His ideality is always conspicuous.

Raphael finally developed an excellent *chiaroscuro*, though he never became a distinguished master of it, like Correggio or Tintoretto. His landscapes give a fine effect of distance.

The true merit of Raphael lies in his delicacy of expression and dramatic power. It was his delight to represent continually the pride and affection with which a mother regards her young child,—and the manner in which he did this may be called incomparable. The subject was a perennial one, but had never before received its due. No other subject requires such tenderness of feeling, such delicacy of touch. It is by these qualities that his Madonnas are to be distinguished rather than by the painting of a hand or the shape of an ear. Especially he endeavored to portray the expression of the eye in those moments when the soul appears visibly to speak through it. It is the best proof of the nobility of his nature that he should have observed and perpetuated those transitory gleams of the divine element in man. If he had never painted any other subject, his success in this would have secured him an immortality on earth; *for that is what it is*. Thus he became a paragon to all women, and created a bond which still unites him to all civilized races.

Raphael's limitation as a dramatic painter was

tragedy. Perhaps he thought that the monks had provided crucifixions and martyrdoms enough for the world already. He was of a sunny temperament, naturally inclined to the cheerful side of life. He succeeded with marvellous ease, and could have known little of the sorrows or troubles of mankind from personal experience. He was too serious to be fond of much revelry, but he liked to dwell upon that deeper kind of happiness which is found in quiet places. Above all things, he loved to signalize the victory of good over evil. There was a natural demand for this, after the intense seriousness of Michel Angelo; but when we consider that the best plays of Shakspeare are all tragedies, that the greatest of Titian's pictures was a tragedy, and so are some of the best of Tintoretto's works, we see that the limitation in this case is not a trifling one. Pathos is the divine sentiment, for it leads men back to justice; and on this account Tintoretto's *Crucifixion* in San Rocco makes a deeper impression than any of Raphael's frescos in the Vatican.

LYRIC PICTURES.

Wherefore do we speak of Titian's *Flora*, Correggio's *Reading Magdalen*, and Raphael's *Saint Cecilia* as poetic? We do not say the same of Titian's *Tribute Money*, though it is a more noble painting than the others.

The two principal divisions of poetry are lyric and dramatic; and when we use the word "poetic," it is the former to which we usually refer. The epic is

a combination of the two; a transitory form between the hymn and the drama. The essence of the simple lyric is a single idea developed by illustration to complete harmony. Goethe's song, *The Wild Rose on the Heather*, is a typical instance of the lyric. A heedless boy is charmed with the rose and plucks it. By this rude act he ingrafts its beauty, in a measure, on his own nature, and the rose dies a sacrifice for the amelioration of mankind. The incident is trivial, but the poet perceives its significance and applies this universally.

The essence of dramatic poetry consists in a conflict of ideas, which are harmonized through the mediation of the poet. If right prevails, they are harmonized in life; otherwise they are harmonized by death.

Raphael was endowed with both the lyric and dramatic gifts. He cultivated the two side by side nearly to the close of his life; and especially the lyric in his youth, for that is the time when we sing.

Michel Angelo came like the storm, and Raphael like the sunshine after it. The boldness with which the former struck out into life, and the gradual manner in which the latter emerged from the shadow of Perugino, were characteristic of them both. If Raphael had been abrupt or violent he would not have been so graceful. He did not develop at first originality of design, but made use of the compositions of Perugino and others, endeavoring to improve upon the execution of them. This was an excellent plan even for a genius, for by correcting the faults of his master he learned to avoid them

himself, and by perfecting himself in technical skill he laid the foundation for universal excellence. An endless discussion has arisen, however, in regard to the authenticity of these rather youthful productions,—a most fruitless discussion, for the value of a work of art depends, as Vasari remarks, on its own merit and not on the reputation of its author. Do we value ancient statues the less because their sculptors are unknown to us? If a picture is good, what is the difference whether it was painted by Raphael or Perugino? The only fact of importance in the question is established by the doubt itself. The transition-types have not the same value in art as in natural history. We should estimate Raphael's earliest pictures for what they are actually worth, and not look at them under the glamour of his celebrity.

In considering these immature efforts we notice in particular that they have an essentially youthful quality. We scarcely discern an effort in them to imitate more mature work; and though the influence of Perugino is apparent in both drawing and coloring, it is not the spirit of Perugino which animates them, but a wholly different spirit. They are the genuine expression of Raphael's own feeling. He has thrown himself unreservedly into his work, and his pure maidenly nature is apparent in almost every line. Although in some instances this is quite inappropriate to the subject, as in his two studies of *St. George and the Dragon*, it nevertheless gives them a peculiar charm and a real value, in spite of their youthful limitations.

THE EARLY DAWN.

The earliest known painting by Raphael is the *Madonna with the Book* * in the Berlin Museum, sometimes called the *Diotalevi Madonna*, and it may have been painted in his fifteenth year. The subject is a simple one; a mother and child,—the one holding the book, and the other clutching a goldfinch in his chubby hand. The drawing is still unskilful, and the attitudes Peruginesque; and yet there is an intimation of the mature Raphael in the perfect oval of the Madonna's face and the peaceful repose of her expression. The infant Christ is more realistic.

The *Solly Madonna* in the same gallery is a more ambitious effort, and must have been painted a year or two later. The Virgin is attended by two saints, who have much of Perugino's strength of portraiture. The drawing is firmer and more truthful, the coloring more vigorous, and the head-dress of the Madonna more gracefully arranged. The folds of her mantle on the left shoulder correspond closely to the same folds on the *Diotalevi Madonna*.

The *Conestabile Madonna* in the Hermitage collection is a later variation on the two Berlin Madonnas, and the chief improvement we notice in it is the more lifelike and spirited attitude of the infant Jesus.

To ambitious youths there usually comes a time when their imagination is excited with thoughts of military glory; and Raphael has left a reflection of this in three small paintings which are quite exceptional in their way.

* C. and C.'s *Life of Raphael*.

The *Vision of a Knight* in the National Gallery is the first painting that indicates Raphael's faculty for facial expression. The attitude of the young knight, lying asleep on his shield at the foot of a preraphaelite tree, is admirable; but his face is maidenly even for a youth of seventeen, and its contour suggests that it may have been an early portrait of Raphael himself; and considered in this light, it is of inestimable value. The vision consists of two damsels; one graceful and comely, who holds out a flower to the knight; and the other, of graver aspect, carries a sword and a book. Both regard him with a tender and pleased expression. The subject may represent a choice between youthful love and those higher honors which can only be purchased by self-denial. The whole painting is filled with the glow of Raphael's youthful personality.

His *St. George and the Dragon* introduces us to Raphael's love of elegance and taste for fine coloring. The drawing of the saint's horse is not so skilful as the terrified expression of the horse's face. Raphael never made a study of animal life, and there is many a realistic Dutchman who excels him in its representation. Here we have again the same maidenly face looking out from a steel helmet, and the composition may have been emblematic of the dragons which Raphael himself was contending with in his onward progress as a painter. It may also have been the first instance in which a white horse has been made to serve as the principal light in a painting.

The *St. George and the Dragon* in the Hermitage collection is not a replica of the Louvre painting, but a similar study, varying slightly in details. It is in some respects an improvement, especially in the drawing of the horse, a more slender animal and in better proportion to his rider.

The *Archangel Michael* in the Louvre may have been a companion piece to the *St. George*, and we see in it the conflict between good and evil transferred to supernatural regions. The resplendent form of the angel in a blue tunic and golden armor is relieved against a sulphurous smoke rising from the infernal regions, together with demons horned and hideous. It is a daring, successful, and brilliant composition; but the exceeding delicacy with which it is painted is more remarkable than anything it contains.

The *Apollo and Marsyas* in the possession of Morris Moore's family is peculiarly interesting on account of the dispute concerning its authenticity. Passavant attributed it to Francesco Francia, and the American critic, James J. Jarves, was one of the first to pronounce it an early and very fine Raphael. This claim has also been supported by Crowe and Cavalcaselle, and is now generally admitted. It is difficult to decide whether it was painted before or after Raphael's migration to Florence; but the introduction of nude figures indicates a new departure in his art. We here encounter the influence of Greek sculpture upon his genius, and perhaps even of the Apollo Belvedere. Marsyas is seated on a

bank playing the flute, or a pipe, in competition with Apollo, who, standing opposite, regards him with a scornful expression. The contrast between the ordinary-looking Marsyas and his idealized rival is admirably expressed; and the whole picture is painted with a loving care and delicacy even to the belladonna flower, symbolic of the fate of Marsyas. The figures are fairly rounded, but lacking in *chiaroscuro*.

BEAUTIFUL LYRICS.

We now escape from the composite paintings done under Perugino's influence, and come forth into the clear sunlight of Raphael's own genius, as developed in the free Florentine air and stimulated by the influence of Filippino Lippi, Angelico, Ghirlandajo, and Leonardo da Vinci. Powerfully influenced by the works of genius which he saw around him and the great minds with whom he came in contact, Raphael nevertheless developed his own style with a purity, simplicity, and exalted feeling, such that many of his admirers have not hesitated to declare his early Florentine paintings to be the most perfect and interesting that he ever produced. They certainly possess this advantage, that they were wholly painted by his own hand, and though we meet with the influence of other masters in the drawing and grouping, they nowhere suffer from direct imitation or the unconscious theft of pictorial ideas. His work in this early dawn of his career was essentially of a lyric character—each painting a poetic gem,—and the world treasures every one of

them at a higher value than many other pictures which are more perfectly painted and more free from archaic limitations. Raphael was reluctant to take leave of the limited and conventional Umbrian art which still formed the basis of his more ambitious efforts, and we find him in 1504 still far behind Leonardo, Titian, and Giorgione in breadth of design, depth of color, or effectiveness of light and shade. Yet Raphael gave to his work a quality peculiarly his own, which emanated from his lofty personality, and which elevates even these early products of his genius above the mature work of any but the greatest masters; and this spiritual grace is expressed with such delicacy as even the greatest have not equalled.

Raphael's Florentine, or, as it is sometimes called, his Nazarene period, produced a series of Madonnas, a few portraits, and a number of allegorical studies. His Madonnas are specially interesting since they were all, or nearly all, taken from the same models, evidently a Florentine lady of good position, and her children; who, though somewhat idealized, appears at different ages during a space of not less than four years. Her first child serves usually as John the Baptist and her second as the infant Saviour; while in the last representation, called the *Madonna of the Diadem*, the second child is omitted and his place supplied by a babe only a few weeks old. The fact that the figures are virtually portraits imparts to these paintings a vivid sense of reality, which Raphael has finely harmonized with the ideal expression he has given to their faces.

The *Madonna del Gran' Duca* is the first purely classic painting in Italian art. It possesses all the charm of the finest Greek work, and yet it is Christian and religious. It is the first of Raphael's Madonnas which he imbued with his peculiar tranquillizing tone, and it is the only one of his Nazarene Madonnas which he painted without a background. Whether it belongs to the series above referred to is uncertain. The features of the Virgin are so youthful as to excite a feeling of sympathy for her premature condition, and it is not impossible that the original of this tender mother afterwards developed into the *Madonna of the Goldfinch*. In that case the picture must have been designed in 1501 or 1502.

It is impossible to conceive a simpler treatment of the subject. The young mother stands before us holding her child on her left hand, with the right under his left shoulder. The drawing is slightly Peruginesque, but with more grace and elegance. Modest humility is its prevailing characteristic, but the eyes of the infant Christ are keen and prophetic. His feet also are skilfully drawn and so lifelike that the toes almost appear to be in motion. The drapery is simple, graceful, and disposed in broad folds; the background a very dark green. The *Madonna del Gran' Duca* charms us from its perfect harmony, its plainness, and from the ideality which seems to be *nascent* in it, like the budding of a flower. What a wide range of artistic sympathies is already indicated by this painting and the *Marsyas*.

The small *Garvagh Madonna* in the National Gal-



ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON
BY RAPHAEL

Gallery of the Louvre

lery is somewhat faded, but forms an important link in this series. It is painted in quite a different manner from the *Gran' Duca*; with less softness and delicacy, but greater solidity. It has Raphael's tranquillity, however, and the pained expression of the Madonna, as she looks at the cross which St. John offers to the infant Christ, marks a striving for dramatic effect. The Saviour is a more idealized type than that in the *Gran' Duca*, and St. John is easily recognized as the same child that figures in the *Madonna of the Goldfinch*. The background is architectural.*

La Belle Jardinière, so called, in the Louvre, must have been designed from the same models as the *Madonna of the Goldfinch*, and probably also from the same as the preceding. The Madonna is seated in a garden or meadow, and the Christ-child, a perfect type of infant beauty, standing at her knee looks into her face with an expression which may be called loveliness itself. The young Baptist, who crouches opposite, is also excellent in form, but rather grotesque in attitude. The face of the Madonna is beautiful, but without much depth of

* I do not understand why Crowe and Cavalcaselle should place the *Garvagh Madonna* among Raphael's early Roman works. The sharpness of the outlines, hardness of coloring, and conventional expression of the Madonna are all indicative of an early effort. It has neither the delicacy nor the facility of Raphael's mature performance. C. and C. say: "The clever way in which the landscape of walled houses is tempered with grey to bring out the brightness of the sunny air in the room, leaving the walls in gloom, is well calculated to remind us of the lessons which Raphael took when he first wandered to Florence." Probably it was painted at that time.

expression. The landscape background is pleasing, but Peruginesque. The coloring has the clear transparent tones which remind us of Filippino Lippi; and the composition is otherwise exceptional for the brightness of its lights. The Christ-child is certainly a marvel of beauty, only surpassed in the *Madonna of the Fish* and the *Sistine Madonna*.

In the *Holy Family* at Munich,* St. Joseph and St. Anna have been added to the preceding group. It also shows the influence of Filippino Lippi; and the delicacy of its coloring, the clearness of its lights, and transparency of its shadows distinguish it from the Titians and Luinis in its neighborhood, as the finest porcelain is distinguished from other wares. The excellence of the design consists rather in its perfection as a whole than in the superiority of any particular figure. The personality of the individual is here merged in the personality of the group, which forms an irregular pyramid with Joseph for its apex. The pyramid typifies the solidity of the family structure; on which cities and empires are built. If Raphael had been conscious of this idea, he might not have succeeded so well in giving it expression. What he wished was to portray his subject in the most typical manner. He succeeded, as no one had done before him, because he understood the mental attitude of each member of the group to every other.

The *Madonna of the Goldfinch* is the finest jewel in Raphael's Nazarene work, and must have been painted a year before the *Madonna of the Meadow*,

* Called also the *Canegiani Madonna*.

which is fortunately dated 1506. This becomes evident by a comparison of the two backgrounds, which are Peruginesque in the former and Leonardesque in the latter. We meet here with a deeper light and shade, and also more depth of expression in the face of the Virgin than in any of the preceding pictures.

It is not so ideal in form or color as the *Holy Family* at Munich, nor has it so good a landscape as the *Madonna of the Meadow*, but it is much more interesting. It fully exemplifies Wasson's precept, that in art we should have the real, with the ideal shining through it. Raphael would seem here to have checked his ideality, and returned to real life to gain vital force, as a grape grower cuts back his vines. The ideality of the picture resides in the spirit in which it was conceived, and issues from it like an invisible influence which we neither see nor feel. The word which best expresses it is loveliness.

The child Jesus is not even elegant, but has a large head, deep-set eyes, a sober expression, and is generally old-looking. St. John, a fine, vigorous boy, holds the goldfinch very carefully and tenderly, so that the little Saviour may examine it. The Virgin Mary looks down on her child and his friend, smiling with love, modesty, and superior intelligence; a smile once seen not to be forgotten again. She is not exactly beautiful, but comely and very pleasant. I suppose no one except Raphael could have given such a pose to her head. There is no mystery about her expression. We all understand

it, and only wish that she would look up once, so that we could see what fine eyes she has.

One would like to know who this charming woman was that favored Raphael with her portrait for his composition. Clearly she was not a vulgar model, but a lady in good society, cultivated and refined, as was Titian's *Venus*, which hangs near in the Tribuna (the same as his *Bella* in the Pitti Palace); but too modest and conscientious to expose herself in that manner. I have read in a German book, that Raphael said he preferred to belong to all women rather than that any one woman should belong to him. He must have been attractive to the other sex, with his quick intelligence, his ready wit, and graceful, dreamy manner. Women gave him their confidence readily, because he penetrated to the depth of their nature and appreciated their finest qualities. They perceived also that he was a man to be trusted. This may have been the reason that he never became married, because the circle of his feminine acquaintance was too large to make a selection from easily. The ones most interesting to him would be those who were already married. There is no rose without its thorn, and Raphael's reputation has suffered, like some others who have been favorites of the fair sex, from the thoughtless mischief of vicious tongues.

The *Holy Family with the Lamb* at Madrid is a subject borrowed with some variations from Da Vinci,* and must have been painted after the *Holy Family* at Munich, if not after the *Madonna of the*

* See the account in C. and C.'s *Life of Raphael*.

Goldfinch. Raphael has introduced a vein of pleasantry by placing the infant Jesus astride of the lamb, who crouches respectfully for the purpose. This is a new element, but harmonized skilfully with that delicate fragrance of religious sentiment which is never absent in Raphael's treatment of subjects from the Bible. It is a small picture, not much above a foot square, and painted with the nicety of a miniature.

The *St. Catherine* in the National Gallery is evidently studied from the same models as the *Madonna of the Goldfinch*. She has the same softly rounded features, the same gently rolling plaits of hair over her temples; but her eyes are raised heavenward, whence beams of light appear descending into them. Her attitude and expression would seem to be a forecast of the *St. Cecilia*, painted nine or ten years later. Her left arm rests upon her wheel, which is so gracefully subordinated to the whole design that it attracts slight attention. Such a position produces a fine *tournure* in her drapery, which Raphael has taken advantage of in a masterly manner,—especially in the roll of her mantle from the right elbow to her left hand. We notice a technical improvement over the *Madonna of the Goldfinch* in a genuine landscape background, containing a river with houses and poplars reflected in it; just as we imagine the blue sky is reflected in the eyes of *St. Catherine*.

The *Madonna of the Meadow*, also sometimes called the *Madonna in Green*, in the Albertina at Vienna, is another exquisite variation of this oft-

repeated subject. The influence of Leonardo is perceptible in the lengthened nose of the Virgin, her short upper lip, narrow chin, and freedom of attitude; as well as in the depth of shadow, roundness of form, and the ærial quality of the landscape. Here the influence of Perugino would seem to have wholly disappeared; and yet the design is not so Raphaelesque as *La Belle Jardinière* or the *Holy Family* at Munich. The attitude of the Virgin—bending forward so as to give her child the protection of her hands, without necessarily interfering with his movements—is here the chief variation in the theme. The expression of the child's eye and the drawing of his mouth are its finest points.

The *Madonna of the Meadow* is adorned with one of the best landscapes that Raphael ever painted. A sky, full of filmy cloud and sunshine, is reflected on a lake in the middle distance; beyond which hillside towns and towers melt like a dream into the horizon. The foreground is left intentionally dark so as to bring out more prominently the light forms of the children.

Not only the attitude of the Madonna, but her long tapering fingers remind us of Leonardo, and controvert Morelli's supposition that Raphael only painted such hands after his introduction into Roman society.

The *Blenheim Madonna*, or *Madonna Ansdei*, now in the National Gallery, was also painted in 1506, but is as different as possible from the *Madonna of the Meadow*. In the latter we have a fresh, buoyant, out-of-door life, wholly free from conventionality;

in the former, a grave and dignified court ceremonial; the light rustic cross of the Baptist in one is replaced by a cross of rock crystal in the other. In the *Blenheim Madonna* the Virgin is seated on a throne wrapped in elaborate drapery, while the Christ-child toys with her blue and white sash. St. Nicholas stands before her in a well-bred attitude of respect, wearing a jewelled mitre and holding an exquisitely wrought golden crozier. The tone of such a painting is well suited to English religious solemnity. It is on wood, nine by five feet, and was purchased by the British Government in 1885 for about \$350,000.*

The *Esterhazy Madonna* at Pesth is not only exceptional in its motive but does not appear to have been finished by Raphael's own hand. In it the Virgin is represented kneeling with the little Saviour pressed against her heart, while the Baptist presents a cross with his left hand and holds up a scroll with the right, on which is written "Ecce Agnus Dei." The composition is charming, but somewhat lacking in simplicity.†

The *Madonna of the Diadem* in the Louvre forms the last of this series, and in it we meet the same mother as in *La Belle Jardinière*, at least three years older; with an older St. John and a much younger Christ-child, whom we naturally suppose to be the third in this highly favored family. The picture cannot be dated earlier than 1507, and owing to the ruins in its landscape background critics have generally conjectured that it was painted after Raphael had removed to Rome. This is possible, but it is

* Karolyi's *Raphael*.

† C. and C.'s *Life of Raphael*, i., 367.

unlikely that his lady model should also have gone to Rome at the same time, especially with a new-born child. If he had painted the group from memory he would not have represented them older, but as they were when he last saw them. The quality of the painting is essentially Florentine as well as its design.

Technically considered the *Madonna of the Diadem* is the most perfect of the Florentine group. The teaching of Leonardo is evident in it, but there is no trace of his personal influence. Raphael has not yet acquired a genuine *chiaroscuro*, and we look at the panel rather than into it; but the limbs of the children, the head and neck of the Madonna, are rounded with an easier touch and a more practised hand than in the *Gran' Duca*; the drawing is not only correct, but every line has the stamp of that feminine grace which the world has never seen but once; and the background, though not a difficult subject, is admirably painted, and lends a romantic influence to the scene.

It cannot be said that the work has too much art, but rather too little genius. Raphael in the devotion to the technical side of his subject may have lost a portion of his inspiration. A picture painted in the full tide of feeling is more likely to produce a magnetic impression even if it has its faults. The effect of the inspired hand should be an instantaneous transition. In this sense the *Madonna of the Diadem* is rather a study for Raphael's own benefit, the good results of which we meet with afterwards, than an end unto itself.

The *Cowper Madonna*, at Panshanger, England, is a link in the rapid transformation of Raphael's art between 1507 and 1509. The mother holds her child in her lap and gracefully refuses the nourishment for which he indicates a very plain desire; a motive as far removed from the sweet sanctity of the *Gran' Duca*, as from the expression of deep maternal fondness in the *Cardellino*.

The *Madonna del Baldachino*, still unfinished, was the last link which bound Raphael to Florence, and was in itself a prophecy of a wholly different class of Madonnas which he was destined to paint at Rome. It is probable that he worked upon it during the winter of 1508. Besides the Holy Family it contains full-length figures of St. James and St. Augustine, as well as two boy angels whose drawing denotes a progress in foreshortening, and suggests the study of Michel Angelo. This and the size of the painting—full twelve square yards of canvas—may be accepted as the measure of Raphael's ambition at twenty-five. The heavy canopy, under which the Madonna and Child are seated, gives an air of state ceremonial to the painting, and this is increased by the solemnity of the two saints. The two cherubs could not be otherwise than graceful, and wherever the work is finished it is beautifully painted; but there is an alien influence in it that is difficult to account for. The head of St. James has also a peculiar contour, which reminds one of the statue of Lorenzo dei Medici the younger. This Madonna is in the Pitti Palace.

PORTRAITS.

Between the *Madonna of the Diadem* and Raphael's next group of Madonnas there intervenes a space of about five years, during which he was occupied with the *Disputa*, the *School of Athens*, the *Parnassus*, and the *Heliodorus* in the Vatican, besides many other works. During this period he improved his art in breadth and vigor of drawing, with a richer, more substantial coloring, a deeper *chiaroscuro*, and united them with a more profound feeling and the most magnificent designs. He discarded everything heretofore conventional in Florentine art, and transplanted its noble nature to the Roman soil, where it could expand in the full freedom of a national life. The influence of Michel Angelo on his drawing is an oft-repeated tale, but it is no less certain that he profited from Leonardo's treatise on painting, and also somewhat from the coloring of Titian, if not also Giorgione. He drew his inspiration from every quarter of the heavens, and, like Tintoretto, summed up in himself all that had been done before him.

Raphael's portraits are not very numerous. Perhaps he considered portrait painting an inferior kind of art, for which he could not afford the time. Certain it is that even Titian's portraits, though our admiration for them might never cease in a private house, are not nearly so interesting as the historical work of painters like Paris Bordone and Sodoma. Raphael's portraits appear to have been either those of personal friends, like the portrait in the Louvre of a youth whose chin is resting in his hand, and the

one of Altoviti at Munich, or of popes and cardinals, from whom he could not very well escape. There are letters, however, of that time which show that he not only painted the portraits of foreign ambassadors, but sometimes even of travellers coming to Rome, as they go there now.

Raphael's early portraits were strongly subjective, and correspond to the other paintings of his Nazarene period. The two mentioned above, though one has a round face and the other a long one, have both been mistaken for his own; and no wonder, for he so infused his own personality into them, that the same pure spirit (like spring sunshine) beams in every feature, which looks out upon us from the eyes of his Madonnas. The authenticity of the Louvre portrait has been questioned, but if style and expression can go for anything, it is a genuine Raphael. What many of his portraits lack, is breadth of treatment; for a portrait requires this as well as a group of figures. They are not equal to Titian's early portraits, though the one in Munich of Altoviti has a good reputation as a study of color.

There are four pictures in the Tribuna attributed to Raphael hanging side by side. The *Madonna of the Goldfinch* and *Pope Julius* we have already considered. The *Madonna del Pozzo* is neither drawn nor colored in the style of Raphael, and though the composition reminds us of him, this is something which any skilful painter can imitate. We therefore leave it out of the account. There remains the so-called *Fornarina*, whose color-tone differs nearly as much from *Pope Julius* as that does

from the *Madonna of the Goldfinch*. In pose and attitude it bears a marked resemblance to the Greek bust of Clytie.

Professor Lübke thinks the picture too exceptional for Raphael, and attributes it to one of the scholars of Giorgione, probably Sebastian del Piombo. This, I believe, is the general opinion of connoisseurs. Morelli agrees with it, but cannot recover from a first Raphaellesque impression which the portrait gave him, and thinks it may have been painted by Sebastian while under the influence of Raphael's magnetism. Grimm, on the contrary, declares that Sebastian never could have risen to so high a flight.

This much is certain. The woman represented here could not possibly have been the Fornarina of Italian social mythology. The absence of a good *chiaroscuro* makes it evident that the portrait was painted during the first decade of the sixteenth century, and we know that Raphael's acquaintance with the Fornarina did not begin for several years later. It has none of the characteristics of the Roman school of painting—especially its rounded solidity. This woman, though perhaps not highly educated, is evidently superior to the contadina class. She might have been a member of the upper-middle class, though perhaps not in fashionable society. The bearing is proud, and she seems to be conscious of a stable position in the world; wholly different from the expression of the *Fornarina* in the Barberini Palace.

Neither is it more likely that she could have served as a model for the *Sistine Madonna*. The



MADONNA OF THE MEADOW

BY RAPHAEL

Belvedere, Vienna

difference in the shape of their heads, as well as the contour of their features, forbids us from supposing this. She has not the long oval face of the enraptured beauty at Dresden, and the height of her forehead, the length of her nose, and the distance between her nose and her chin are almost the same (a proportion more common among men than women), while the nose of the *Sistine Madonna* is fully two fifths the length of her face,—her mouth and chin being unusually small. The expression of this portrait is of a bright, keen-witted person, fully conscious of her advantages in life, and intending to make good use of them; not an elevated nature, but a fine example of the more practical sort. She may not be worldly herself, but she understands the world and how to deal with it.

The portrait is beautiful in spite of its faults. It has no *chiaroscuro* worth speaking of. The features are drawn rather than painted, so as to give the face a slight sculpturesque quality. The drawing is graceful, but the composition is such as to give a general effect of squareness; caused I think by the lines of the neck being perpendicular to those of the forearm. Yet there is a sweetness of expression in the eyes which is Raphael's own; nor do I believe it has ever been imitated; nor could a mouth be more beautifully and tenderly feminine. The execution also shows a master hand. The lace on her neck is represented by two curving white lines, which seem to be one of the most difficult feats of art; and, what is remarkable, the line on the right side, where the edge of the lace would be more exposed, is more

firmly drawn and slightly broader than that on the left. The narrow band of embroidery around the edge of her chemise, worked with curious little figures, is such as only a painter who delights in his skill would take the trouble to represent.

The shadows on her face and neck are like the shadows on snow, and there is a sparkle like frost in her eyes; yet she is warm, tender, and human. If there is another such dazzling portrait of a woman it is the Eve in Tintoretto's *Paradise*. She is wonderfully tempered between maidenly purity and womanly love. The portrait resembles Giorgione's style, and yet with a decided difference. Instead of being lighted from within, the light comes from its *surface*. Is it not more likely that Raphael painted it under the influence of Giorgione, than that Sebastian painted it under Raphael's influence? Even Titian's beautiful women do not possess such intelligence and vitality. If, then, Titian could not have painted it, what shall we say of Sebastian del Piombo? I cordially agree with Professor Grimm, that it is much beyond Sebastian's power of the brush, and if it be not the work of Raphael, I cannot imagine by whose agency such a portrait came to exist.

Connoisseurs always go to the hands; but in Raphael's case they would do better to consider how the eyes are painted. Raphael nearly approached Leonardo in his expression of intelligence, but no hands that he ever painted can be compared to those of the *Mona Lisa*; and his hands vary greatly in different pictures. If, however, the right hand of

the so-called *Fornarina* be compared with the left hand of the *Madonna of the Goldfinch*, I think it would be seen that they are closely allied in drawing, though the latter is more deeply shaded. If we suppose this picture, then, to have been painted about 1507 when Giorgione's fame was at its height, we may safely conclude it was Raphael's first attempt in the Venetian style. The woman herself is so thoroughly Florentine that she might have served in the Carnival as an emblematic deity. The notion that she was Raphael's mistress—for which there is not the ghost of a probability—has given this picture an unpleasant association, and prevented it from being admired so much as it deserves.

Now we will return a year or more to Raphael's own portrait in the portrait room of the Uffizi, which looks like a man of twenty-two or -three, and very likely was painted when he first began to be famous. It would seem to have been the first portrait that he painted. It has not the deep, rich coloring of the so-called *Fornarina*, but resembles that picture in its sharp contrasts of light and shade,—like the sunshine and shadow in the streets of Florence. There is, however, a more convincing point of resemblance between them. If photographs of the two are placed side by side, I think it will be perceived that they must have been drawn by the same hand. This is particularly noticeable in the lines of the throat which have that slight tendency to a double curve which constitutes the grace of Raphael. The visual angle at which both portraits

are painted is also the same, though the face of one is turned to the right and the other to the left.

Now Raphael's drawing has been copied with some success, but it never has been imitated. Sassoferrato made some excellent copies from Raphael, but he was unable to imitate his style, though he would probably have liked much to do so. He painted his own pictures in a wholly different manner. Raphael's drawing was an ideal.

Raphael's expression in the Uffizi portrait is dreamy, observing, and maidenly pure. The face is unique, but does not, like Leonardo's, bear the stamp of greatness. He has an uncommonly long neck, and also a very long nose. His hair is long, but does not fall upon his shoulders. All of the features are delicate, feminine, and finely cut. His lips might have been carved upon a gem. His artist's cap is picturesque, and sets off his face to advantage. There is no tenderness in his eye, nor anywhere a trace of emotion. The flesh tints must have become lighter with time, or his complexion was a very pale one. There is a duplicate of this portrait in the Louvre whose authenticity has been doubted.

Raphael's pontifical portraits are quite another affair, and fully equal to those by Titian or Rubens; though their excellence is of a somewhat different kind. Titian's portraits take the precedence in *reality*; Raphael's in *vitality*. Next to Leonardo, no painter has ever put so much life into the eyes as Raphael, and even Leonardo perhaps did not have so clear a perception of the internal life.

He also surpassed Titian in delicacy of expression, difficult as that might seem to be; while he narrowly approached him in depth and vigor of coloring. From 1508 to 1515 Raphael practised a wholly different scale of coloring from what he had previously done; and the influence of Titian and other Venetians is plainly traceable in this. In the external presentation of human life Titian surpassed Raphael, who might almost be called an intellectual specialist.

There are four portraits of Pope Julius II., generally supposed to be by his hand: one in the National Gallery, one in the Pitti Palace, another in the Tribuna, and one in the Borghese Palace; all representing him in a similar if not the same identical position. It would be well if they could all be brought together and compared, as Holbein's Dresden and Darmstadt *Madonnas* were some time since, so that it might be decided which was the original painting and what other differences exist between them. As only the very finest works of art are admitted to the Tribuna, it is presumable that Italian judges consider that the original; although Grimm discovers a peculiar radiance in the portrait of the Pitti, and until recently the London portrait was considered equal to either. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, however, have advanced the rather surprising opinion that none of the portraits of Julius are by Raphael's own hand. Anton Springer, who provides the art criticism for Baedeker, believes that the copy in the Uffizi is the original work, but that Raphael also painted the head of the portrait in the Pitti. Crowe and Cavalcaselle con-

sider the latter a copy by Giovanni da Udine. It would not be prudent to accept Crowe and Cavalcaselle's judgment as final in this case. It is not likely that Julius would neglect the opportunity of having his portrait painted by Raphael; nor would Raphael be likely to deceive him in regard to his own share in its authorship. After one portrait had been finished others could be copied from it, to which Raphael would give the finishing touches, and which Julius would present to princes or prelates. This would explain the existence of replicas, all of which possess a high degree of merit.

This, then, is the "violent and diabolical person" of whom Machiavelli writes. Raphael has represented him as simply as possible sitting for his portrait in a dignified manner, while he revolves in his mind those great plans which were the companions of his life. He does not look like a diplomatic Italian, but more like a New England judge or orthodox clergyman of fifty years ago; men absolute and domineering in their narrow circle, but who yield at the same time faithful obedience to certain prescribed rules of conduct. His face, though severe, is not unattractive, and wins confidence. He was the best subject Raphael could have had; unless, indeed, he had painted Martin Luther, who came to Rome not long afterward.

Julius II. was a political gladiator who vanquished his opponents, not by main strength or dextrous fencing, but by an unexpected, deadly thrust. The Pope's own counsellors could never foresee what enterprise he would undertake next. As we look at

him on Raphael's canvas he is in the perfect balance between thought and action. He is resting, but it is the repose of a panther; he may start to his feet in a second and astonish mankind.

ROMAN MADONNAS.

Perugino was always the same; but the perspective in which we view him depends on the place where he happened to be. In Perugia he appears like a great man; in Florence like a good artist; and in Rome we do not think of him. It was exactly the reverse with Raphael: the grander his surroundings the better he seemed to be adapted to them. We need not be surprised at the effect of his life in Rome on Raphael. In the fifteenth century the greatness of the Papacy emulated that of the old Roman Empire, and the magnificence of the papal court in Raphael's time surpassed that of Louis XIV. Religion was little better than a form, but the prelates who surrounded Leo X. were not only art critics, but philosophers, historians, and antiquaries. They united to a life of worldly splendor a genuine interest in the highest intellectual pursuits.

Raphael drank in wisdom from all these various sources as if he had been a graduate of Berlin University, instead of having spent his earlier years over the drawing-board and pallet. He learned, as Shakspeare learned afterwards. Genius does not require to know Greek declensions in order to understand the spirit of Hellenic life, nor to study Sanskrit

in order to penetrate the mystery of the Vedic hymns. No other painter has shown such a clear penetration into the history of the subjects which he represented ; and while Tintoretto painted a Roman centurion in armor of the fifteenth century, Raphael equipped the combatants in his *Battle of the Milvian Bridge* with such standards and helmets as were used by Brutus and Cassius. The single story told of Raphael which illustrates his true character is the leaving his manifold occupations to take care of an old archæologist, upwards of eighty, in his last illness. Such was the return he made for former benefits ; and as an illustration of his own nature it shows how generous and veracious the man continued to be to the close of his life. More beautiful even than the *Transfiguration* is this picture of a world-genius subordinating himself to the mean, physical needs of a dying friend. It is the transfiguration of Raphael.

Between 1510 and 1514 he painted another group of Madonnas, differing a good deal from his earlier ones. Perhaps he felt the need of doing this. They are not, however, conceived in so pure a spirit as the earlier group. In this list are comprised the *Madonna of the Duke of Alba*, at present in St. Petersburg ; the *Madonna Impannata*, in the Pitti Palace ; the *Madonna of Divine Love*, at Naples ; the *Madonna under the Oak*, in Madrid ; the *Madonna di Foligno*, in the Vatican ; and the *Madonna of the Fish*, in Madrid. They show, as might be expected, more maturity of design, breadth of drawing, a more

skilful distribution of light and shade, and especially a stronger, richer coloring, approaching the Venetian. And yet they are transition types which represent the fulness of the painter's external development, without, however, this being harmonized perfectly with the ideal consciousness of his spirit. Not one of them is so much beloved as the *Madonna of the Goldfinch*; and the *Madonna di Foligno*, which was painted in 1511, has a decided tone of aristocratic reserve, and in the adventitious quality of its composition it is neither lyrical nor dramatic.

The *Alba Madonna* must have been painted at Rome, but contains reminiscences of Florentine study. It unites the attitude of the Virgin in the *Madonna of the Meadow* with the foreboding expression of the *Gavargh Madonna*. As it is now in the Hermitage collection, few besides the unideal Russians have an opportunity of seeing it.

The *Madonna di Foligno* has now an appropriate place in the Vatican beside the *Transfiguration*. It was painted for Sigismond Conti, as a votive offering for a narrow escape he met with from a projectile in the wars of Pope Julius; and the projectile is represented in it rushing across the sky. It was the first of Raphael's Madonnas in which he represented the Virgin Mary as a celestial being. She is seated on the clouds with quite an elevated expression; and Conti himself, an admirable portrait, with John the Baptist adoring her beneath. According to Crowe and Cavalcaselle, only the Madonna and Conti were finished by Raphael himself; yet the Baptist is not only the most interesting figure in the

group, but perhaps the most original and romantic of all Raphael's male creations. The expression of the Madonna is too condescending to win our sympathy: Raphael had yet to learn that if we are to be lifted up to the clouds, the clouds must also be brought down to us.

The *Madonna of Divine Love* at Naples is an instance of an admirable design spoiled by an execution of a different quality from the designer. If Giulio Romano, or whoever painted it, had conceived the subject out of his own mind, it might have been a more satisfactory picture than it is at present; although the name of Raphael gives it an adventitious interest. Among the fifty excellent artists whom Vasari speaks of in Raphael's service, there does not appear to have been one who resembled him in temperament or equalled him in delicacy of feeling. In this *Madonna* a Holy Family is grouped within a Roman ruin, and St. Joseph is seen approaching them through an archway.

The *Madonna del' Impannata*, now in the Pitti Palace, is a repetition of the preceding with some variations. The scene is laid in a cottage, and a green screen serves as a background for the red waist of the Madonna. The Baptist is seated on a leopard-skin, and seems to be looking out of the picture. Raphael's own touch is visible on it in places; but the execution is unequal, and the attitude of the Baptist suggests that Raphael himself had turned away from his work and was seeking fresh interest in some new direction.

By far the finest of the Madonnas of this middle

period is the *Madonna of the Fish*, of which the more important portion must have been painted by Raphael's own hand. Nothing indicates this more decisively than the smoothness of its surface—so that it seems like the reflection of a picture in a mirror—and the tranquil tone which he has infused in it. By a happy anachronism Tobias and the angel have come to pay a visit to the infant Christ, before whom they bow in devout reverence, while his mother clasps him to her left shoulder, and St. Jerome balances the group with an open Bible in his hand, and the lion at his feet. The face of the Madonna is grave, and reminded me, in her expression, of Michel Angelo's Madonna at Bruges. She has the same fulness over the eyelid in the outer corner of her brow that we have noticed in the so-called *Fornarina* of the Tribuna. Her eyes are cast down with humility, for she knows it is her divine child, and not herself, to whom homage is being paid. She does not even permit herself to exult in his glory, but holds him so that he may appear before the angel to the best advantage. A fine point this, and worth recollecting.

Next observe Raphael's blending of the human and divine in the action of the Christ-child. He first looks down at the fish with juvenile curiosity, but in the same instant recognizes the angel, and his immortal birthright asserts itself in full force. This is indicated in the expression of his eye while his face is still turned toward Tobias. It is the same eye that we see in the Sistine Jesus,—the eye of eternity itself. No mortal child could ever have

had such an expression; not even such a child as Raphael may have been himself. His look is so surprising that we are inclined to forget the pure plastic beauty of the child's figure. His form is an ideal; but this is gracefully concealed by the originality of his attitude. He has placed his left hand on the book, to signify to St. Jerome that he should desist from reading on account of the visitors,—saints being proverbially oblivious to external events.

Yet the picture is not without its peculiarities. The adoration of the angel borders closely on the obsequious; the aspect of the Madonna is quiet and dignified, but with something of the *hauteur* already noticed in the *Madonna di Foligno*; and St. Jerome is indeed a grand piece of realism, but one feels that he is almost too rugged—his beetling brows and shiny forehead—to be in perfect harmony with the rest of the group. The folds of the Madonna's dress are peculiar and give it an appearance of heaviness too much in keeping with her own expression. Tobias, whose chief ornament is his flowing golden hair, is more in sympathy with the Christ-child, and gives a ground-tone to the coloring. The lion is not faithfully rendered, but has a dangerous gleam in his eye such as only Raphael or Leonardo could give.

The Christ-child certainly in this picture is a distinct advance from the Jesus in the *Madonna of the Goldfinch*, with his large, premature head and serious expression. The ideal form of the London Christ-child has now been matched by an ideality of nature, or rather of spirit. Those who prefer individuality



LA FORNERINA, BY RAPHAEL

Uffizi Gallery, Florence

in art to perfect symmetry of form, would therefore consider this superior to the Sistine Christ-child, who in the opinion of some approaches dangerously near to the eclectic. As Raphael increased in years and experience, his representations of Jesus became continually younger.

The little Saviour in the *Madonna of the Fish* illustrates Homer's description of Astyanax, the son of Hector, "a beautiful boy that shone like a star."

PROPHETS AND SIBYLS.

Michel Angelo's influence over Raphael culminated about 1514, and from that time gradually diminished until it quite disappeared,—except so far as freedom of design and breadth of treatment may be considered in that light. The most palpable instance of it is his fresco of Isaiah in the Church of San Agostino, in which the imitative quality is so strongly marked that a fable is related by Vasari, evidently invented to account for it. This of course subtracts from the work all the merit which we ascribe to originality. It is only interesting as an imitation, and is now in rather a ruinous condition.

The frescos of Prophets and Sibyls in the Church of Santa Maria della Pace are also strongly Michel-angelesque, and, though much admired, remind one of the adage not to put new wine into old bottles. The original mistake consisted in the banker Chigi's forcing Raphael on to Michel Angelo's ground. These were subjects in which Michel Angelo could not compete with Raphael—feminine delicacy and

the elegance of cultivated life,—but Prophets and Sibyls might be considered his specialty. Raphael knew little of either personal or national misfortunes. Prophetic power did not belong to him; and in the frescos of the Pace this is not less recognizable than the imitative influence of the Sistine Chapel. Chigi himself appears to have been dissatisfied with the performance of his order; and it is fair evidence of the unconsciousness of Raphael's frequent plagiarism, that he should have invited Michel Angelo to determine the value of the work for Chigi's benefit. Michel Angelo must have smiled inwardly at beholding this reflection of his own genius in the Umbrian mirror. Perhaps the best that can be said of the frescos in the Pace now is that the architectural effect of the whole series is admirable and that they still possess an aroma of Raphael's grace and loveliness.

The young *John the Baptist in the Wilderness* is somewhat Michelangelesque, but also a purely original composition. He is a mere boy, seated on a log, with a small rustic cross in his hand; but he is perfect in form and feature, a youthful Apollo but a modern Italian, and with a religious mission before him which fills his soul. I find a resemblance between him and the bronze praying boy which was fished out of the Tiber and is now in Berlin. Raphael is supposed to have painted it in or about 1515, and if so this is the first picture in which he threw a general color-tone over the whole canvas; a sort of neutral olive, very pleasant to the eye. The tender age of St. John, the beauty of his form, and the

loneliness of his situation appeal irresistibly to the poetic sense of the observer (if he has that in him). Whether the original is in the Uffizi Gallery and a duplicate in the Louvre, or *vice versa*, is uncertain, but there is also an excellent copy in Berlin. Sassoferrato certainly copied Raphael with remarkable success; for which he is more distinguished than for his own paintings. The best artists would not be able to do it now, so far removed are we from the methods of the Roman school.

In Greek sculpture an ideal form was everywhere united with a moral principle. Thus Hercules was an ideal of physical strength, but never of brute force. It was strength applied to great and useful undertakings, and the expression of his face indicates this. He looks like one who has toiled and endured much: truly a very noble expression, as the best statues of him bear witness. In like manner, Mercury was an ideal of lightness and quickness; but his swiftness was given him so that he might carry the messages of the gods,—that is, important tidings to mankind. Pallas was an ideal of intellect, and she was represented in armor, because intelligence is always obliged to protect itself against the numerical superiority of dulness and ignorance. This, and not the mythology we hear so much of, was the actual religion of the Greeks, and under its influence they achieved successes which no other nation has since surpassed. Their statues and temples still exercise a powerful sway over the minds of men, and help to determine the destinies

of the race. The Venus of Melos is still a goddess; and the Demosthenes of the Vatican is more eloquent than any living orator.

The main effort of early Italian art was to represent the spiritual unity as it appears incarnated in different individualities. The lives of the Madonna and the saints gave them ample opportunity for this, and served in fact both as the subject and the object of their art. What they wished to express is the divinity in man,—what we call holiness; and two centuries were not wasted in the attempt to accomplish this. Abstract types of virtue presented allegorically, as we meet with them in Spenser's *Faërie Queene*, were not in their thoughts. The faces that they painted wear always the same spiritual expression; conditioned only by happiness, sorrow, or suffering, and by the personality of the painter.

It was permitted Raphael alone to harmonize the Christian and pagan spirit, the classic and the romantic in perfect unity; to give holiness in man, and more especially in woman, a complete external manifestation; and at the same time to create types of manliness and womanliness which might serve as ideals to future generations.

Yet he indicated a tendency toward this from the very beginning. The composition of his earliest pictures, in the stately repose of their figures, their harmonious disposition, the simple elegance of their attire, and the ideality which seems like an atmosphere about them, proves that the spirit of Phidias or Apelles had again visited the earth. This was the tendency of his time, but of all the Renaissance

artists, in Raphael alone it attained to ripe fruition; though he never studied Hellenic art with such devotion as did Michel Angelo, who, nevertheless, remained romantic both in sentiment and design till the close of his life.

But Raphael was also a Christian to the backbone, and as compact of religious feeling as Fra Angelico himself. With his death the spirit of mediæval holiness, as distinguished from the religious feeling of modern times, disappeared forever.

PURE IDEALS.

We cannot prize too highly those few later paintings which were mostly by Raphael's own hand. Much more than the immense frescos of the Vatican, they show him to us as he actually was. The first of these, painted, according to the German authorities, in 1516, and coming next as a pure ideal after his *St. John in the Wilderness*, is the famous *Madonna della Sedia*. The circular frame of this picture serves to give it the same appearance of home-like confidence as the triangular space in which Michel Angelo represented the *Family of Josias*; but the *Madonna della Sedia* is an ideal of maternal happiness, so tender that the presence of a man in it would seem to be an intrusion. Joseph is only permitted to look at the scene from a distance. The Madonna clasps her child to her breast and knows of naught beside. She looks away in dreamy forgetfulness of all care and anxiety; while the little St. John standing at her knee, with child-like sympathy reflects

the same feeling. It is a dream of maternal bliss, and fills one with a restful content. St. John's little cross, almost out of sight, adds just a touch of religious sentiment to it.

The Christ-child is purely human although an ideal; very different from the one in the *Madonna of the Fish*. He is full of dimples and prettiness, and seems to be beating time with his feet.* He does not look premature, and his eyes, though full of intelligence, give no suggestion of a divine origin. They are the eyes of genius, and his lips have also a distinguished expression, which we shall meet with once again.

There are those who have condemned the whole picture on account of the face of the Madonna, which is a perfect oval and dangerously near eclecticism. Its outline is an unbroken curve, and her cheek is shaded with a more perfect gradation of color than any rose petal. Suspicious critics have their doubts about this, while a keen-sighted young woman will only discover rare beauty in it. It lacks, as all such faces must, the strength of individuality.

I have seen the shadow on the profile of a girl form a perfectly straight line from her hair to her lips. That a face like that of the *Madonna della Sedia* is not impossible, has been proved in the case of the daughter of a sail-maker on the New England coast. This girl, cradled by east winds and living among the roughest people, grew up to be the most beautiful woman of her time. At least those who

* See account of this painting in Grimm's *Raphael*.

beheld her in her youthful glory all agreed that they had neither seen nor could they imagine a woman who surpassed her. Everybody noticed that all her features were perfect, but that her eyes were exceptional even in so rare a face. There was a plastic modulation to her face which is not to be found in the *Madonna della Sedia*,—not at least in the *Madonna* herself, though more in the infant Christ.

Such is the effect of a palace on our sense of proportion that the *Madonna della Sedia* seems hardly larger in the Pitti Gallery than the engravings of it in our own parlors. It is painted with the delicacy of a miniature, and the way in which Raphael has harmonized the variety of tints with which the Virgin's dress is adorned is no less remarkable; and the folds of it are so simple and natural that it seems as if they could not have been otherwise. It is a gem, and deserves the setting of a gem. We notice also that he has returned here to nearly the same tone of color which he brought in his youth from Perugia to Florence. Raphael has surrendered the Venetian method, so far as it ever appertained to him.

A more elevated work and one of the most beautiful of Raphael's creations is his *St. Margaret*, in the Louvre. In it a color tone more serious than that of *St. John in the Desert*, and almost like a cloudy twilight, is combined with an atmospheric effect, which I do not think he achieved again. To place a painting in the first great hall of the Louvre with the *Mona Lisa* and Correggio's *Antiope* on one side, and Paul's *Wedding Feast at Cana* on the other, is a severe test even for a Raphael. But even amid

this Alpine group pale St. Margaret holds us by her spell. Of all Raphael's female forms she is the loveliest and the most beautiful, always excepting the Sistine Madonna. She may have been a reminiscence of the woman who gave her portrait to the *Madonna of the Goldfinch*; for she is evidently an ideal, and as she comes forward, out of the shade, with a smile of enchanting purity on her lips, we can only think of Shakspeare's verse:

"So shines a good deed in this naughty world."

The dragon is repulsive; all the more so for being superbly drawn and painted. I confess that no picture which contains a dragon or a large snake is altogether pleasant to me; and I believe that any first-rate engraver who would engrave the figure of St. Margaret by itself (coming out of a mist) would make his fortune, for it is only the dragon which prevents this painting from being among the most popular of all.

Raphael's inventive faculty shows itself continually in small matters. Has it not been truly said that Raphael created as Nature creates? This dragon is as much a veritable monster as a crocodile or a zeuglodon. It is a physiological possibility. One would know that Raphael designed it, from the original pattern of its markings, which has his style just as the sword has it, on which St. Paul is leaning in the musical picture at Bologna. The pattern is as lifelike as that on the back of a boa constrictor, but it is not to be found on any living reptile. More important is the *chiaroscuro* in which the tail

is represented. It seems to be full five yards long, and yet is painted within the space of four square feet. Foreshortening could never effect this without the finest light and shade.

Two other large pictures in the same hall, the *Holy Family of Francis I.*, and the *Archangel Michael Overpowering Satan*, are not of equal value. The former is mannered both in drawing and coloring. Grimm prefers Raphael's original drawing to the finished picture; and it seems doubtful if Raphael even touched the canvas with his chalk. It has his breadth of design but little else to elevate it above second-class work. Sebastian del Piombo wrote of it to Michel Angelo as being "like polished steel, the figures all dark and bright,"—an excellent criticism of Julio Romano's method.

The *Archangel and Satan* was quite as evidently painted by Giovanni da Udine. Its warm but opaque coloring does not compare favorably with the clear tones of the *St. Margaret* adjoining. Neither is the design as felicitous as might have been expected. The spear of Michael almost divides the canvas longitudinally; an effect which every artist is now instructed to avoid. Guido Reni conceived a much finer design of Michael and Satan, a hundred years later. In both paintings, however, the undercurrent of Raphael's genius is apparent.

ST. CECILIA AND THE SISTINE MADONNA.

These two celebrated paintings have a close spiritual relationship. The arrangement of the *St. Cecilia*

group at Bologna is a formal one, which places it out of sympathy with modern art, but it contains an internal harmony which has vibrated through the hearts of millions. What it was formerly can now be best understood by Raphael Morghen's engraving and the solitary figure of St. Cecilia in the Pinacothek at Munich. Napoleon carried the original to Paris, where, according to Morelli, it was entirely repainted. It was for this and other similar depredations that Pasquino coined the searching witticism, "*Francesi son ladroni ; non tutti, ma buona parte.*" * In this picture Raphael has perpetuated the different attitudes with which people are naturally affected while listening to music. St. Cecilia has ceased playing herself, in order to listen to the celestial choir who have caught up the refrain above. Her face is turned upward with an expression of pure enjoyment, elevated by a sense of angelic companionship. As an ideal of highly endowed intelligence, the figure of St. Paul leaning on his sword in deep reverie comes next to Raphael's Plato in the *School of Athens* ; and his drapery is equally remarkable for its freedom and breadth of drawing.

And now we approach Raphael's most magnetic picture, the *Madonna di San Sisto*.

Of all works of art we may fancy this to have been the nearest approach to an instantaneous creation. It has the appearance of having been painted very swiftly, but at the same time with exquisite smoothness. We know how Goethe's songs and ballads came to be. His mind was suddenly inspired

* The French are thieves ; not all, but a good part.



"ÆNEAS GROUP," FROM THE "INCENDIO DEL BORGO"

BY RAPHAEL

Vatican, Rome

with them, and he seized upon the nearest piece of paper, sometimes writing upon it diagonally in his haste to be delivered. So this picture must have been painted. It is a divine creation, and so inevitable that we feel it must always have existed,—as it always will exist.

Its superiority was not appreciated in Raphael's own time, or Leo X. would certainly never have permitted it to leave Rome. Vasari refers to it in some six or eight lines, and then writes nearly a page concerning the St. Cecilia group. Perhaps he never saw it. We wonder what Raphael thought of it himself, and whether he was for once satisfied with his own work.

The arrangement is a formal one, and it is painted in rather a slight manner; but its formality is consistent with perfect freedom, and its treatment is equally well adapted to the subject. How different is this almost translucent coloring from that of the *Madonna di Foligno*, or the portraits of Pope Julius; but Julius was a living person, and the forms before us are those of spirits. The Madonna, her child, and the two cherubs certainly are; and St. Sixtus and St. Barbara would seem to be also; for they have nothing but the clouds to rest on. The Pope has placed his tiara on the broad plank, which may be supposed to represent the sill of a window, and the two famous cherubs cling to this also, as birds perch upon a rail. They all have a reality which satisfies us, but it is not the reality of Titian's portraits. A line drawn through each one of them would form the outline of a spear-head.

The beauty of the Madonna depends more on her expression than her features, though she may be considered in all respects as an ideal. It is only an oval face that could represent such earnestness, and only her large eyes and delicate mouth could express such tenderness. People's faces when they are serious not only appear longer, but actually are so. A face like that of the Donna Velata in Florence would have spoiled it all. How did Raphael obtain this expression? Did he imagine it; or did he notice it on the face of some young mother praying for her child in a Roman church? No engraver has imitated it,—has imitated the look of those eyes. Even Murillo could not have copied it.

In the Sistine Jesus the finest qualities of his predecessors are united. He has the symmetrical head of the Christ-child in London, the eyes of the one in Madrid, and the ideality in the *Madonna della Sedia*, but in quite a different manner. There are neither dimples nor prettiness about him, but his lines are drawn with classic purity and vigor. He has the eyes of the Jesus in Madrid, but developed more completely. They intimate not only a future, but a past immortality. An all-seeing beneficent spirit appears in them, and the slight pressure of his under lip is prophetic of the parables, the sermon on the mount, and the agony in the garden. As he rests on his mother's arm he looks as if he might rule a kingdom or command an army. Every hair on his head is numbered, and Raphael has at last succeeded in creating a divine boy.

The simplicity of the Virgin's dress adds to her

grace and dignity. Every fold in it is a study in proportion. Her naked feet tread the clouds as lightly as moonbeams lie on the water. The clouded background of cherubs' heads shows a Shakspearian imagination.

It sometimes happens where there is a genius in a family, that he will also have a brother who resembles him in all respects except that. Such is the relation between the two cherubs beneath, and the infant Saviour. They are of the same nature with him, but not, like him, exceptional.

The final excellence of this work consists in its perfect harmony. As the grace of Raphael's drawing belonged to himself, so he possessed the faculty of making all the people about him feel in accord with one another; and this was the more remarkable because, as is well known, artists are of all men the most jealous. This will appear more clearly when we compare the *Sistine Madonna* with other works of the same character, such as Correggio's *Notte* in the Dresden Gallery, and with Titian's *Ascension of the Virgin*. Correggio's pictures are always harmonious, but it is too much the harmony of similarity. All the faces in his *Notte* have nearly the same expressions, varied only by age, sex, and temperament. In the *Ascension of the Virgin* Titian has succeeded in creating a truly noble harmony between the Heavenly Father and the upward soaring Madonna, but the cherubs who accompany her and form a sort of fringe to the cloud (and some of them have a superior beauty) are all separate individualities without any definite relation to her or to one

another. The group of apostles below have a definite relation among them, but they are separated from the rest of the picture by their realistic attitudes and gestures. There is no one chord of feeling running through the whole.

Now let us return from Venice to Dresden. How different is the expression of the Sistine Virgin from that of her child, and yet how strong is the bond which unites them. As in all true artistic contrasts, there is a deep undercurrent of agreement. In like manner the pious gravity of St. Sixtus is contrasted with the blissful holiness of St. Barbara. One of the cherubs is also grave, and the other smiling. All are united in their reverence for the divine will which Christ represents, but which he also implicitly obeys.

There is a lofty harmony in Murillo's Madonnas, hovering in those heavenly depths of sky, which only he could paint; but they are far off and unapproachable. They affect us like distant strains of music. The green curtains, as well as the friendliness of the two cherubs, bring the Sistine Madonna very near to us;—with the help of engravings and photographs to our own firesides.

The *Sistine Madonna* is the only one of Raphael's works in which he equals the depth of Michel Angelo.

PORTRAIT OF LEO X.

The finest of all Raphael's portraits, painted at the zenith of his genius, is that of Leo X. in the Pitti Palace. It is more skilfully painted than any of the portraits of Julius II., although not so in-

teresting a subject. There were good reasons why Raphael should exert all his talent to please this munificent patron.* Perfectly real and lifelike, without the least flattery of form or feature, he has nevertheless bestowed on it an impression of decisive character and intellectual force, which belonged more properly to Julius. In spite of his homely features, he figures as the ideal pope,—every inch a pope; and the two cardinals, Rossi and Giulio dei Medici, though admirable portraits, were perhaps unconsciously subordinated to this fact. The latter, afterwards Clement VII., has banged hair and wears his red cap on the back of his head with the air of a notable dandy. The coloring is clear, rich, and luminous; nearly if not quite equal to Titian.

The *Donna Velata* is another very much admired portrait in the Pitti Palace; and the expression of her eyes proves it to have been painted by Raphael, though perhaps not wholly by his own hand. Her eyes remind us slightly of the Sistine Madonna, but their form and the cast of her other features are so different, that it is quite unlikely that she served as a model for that wonderful creation. The relationship which Morelli thought he had discovered between this portrait and the Roman *Fornarina* is still more improbable.

It is a simply and exquisitely painted portrait of a lady, without any effort for artistic effect. Raphael for once has rendered life as he saw it, and the features of the *Donna Velata*, though quite regular, are not of a high order of beauty.

* C. and C.'s *Life of Raphael*.

On the contrary, in the *Violin Player* of the Sciarra Palace he has given his subject an air of the most penetrating romance. It is a portrait and so much more that we earnestly wish he had left behind him an equally worthy likeness of himself. The face has a dash of the gipsy in it, but is indicative of a nature poetic and alive to fine influences. The arrangement of his cap, the turn of his head, and the expression of his eyes all have their effect in the *tout ensemble*. The long dark hair on either side of his neck brings the brightness of the face into prominent relief, and for refined richness of coloring it rivals the portrait of Leo X.

The *Vision of Ezekiel* in the Pitti Palace is a lofty and imaginative design; but if connoisseurs are to be trusted (which they are not to be altogether), Raphael never touched his brush to it.

FRESCOS IN THE FARNESINA.

The *Triumph of Galatea* in the Farnesina Palace was painted in imitation of the antique. Raphael had seen something of ancient mural paintings in the baths of Titus and other Roman ruins, and, although these were not of a superior quality, he was quick to seize the spirit of Greek painting, and to reproduce it with the additional charm of his own personality. His extensive fresco in the Farnesina is a wild revel of nymphs and uncouth sea-monsters assisted by ærial cupids; and yet the work has an orderly arrangement, and its execution supplies a sense of elegance which serves to reconcile the scene

to our modern ideas of propriety. In his *Galatea* Raphael has dived into the spirit of classical antiquity as one bathes in the sea at Capri. We realize it in her contented smile, the fluttering of her veil, the ripple of the water, and the evident enjoyment of the Tritons disporting themselves like seals and dolphins. The whole scene breathes an atmosphere of innocent sensuous delight.

The epicycle of *Cupid and Psyche* in the Farne-sina is designed in the same spirit as the *Triumph of Galatea*, but executed with much less attention from Raphael himself. The various episodes in this composition are represented in spandrels and lunettes, surrounded by graceful arabesques conceived with a refined delicacy and in a spirit of charming playfulness, which makes them attractive at the first glance; but they only deserve study so far as is necessary for the interpretation of the separate scenes. We discover Venus directing Eros to persecute Psyche with his love-darts; the intercession of the Graces in favor of Psyche; the complaint of Venus to Jupiter; Mercury dispatched in search of Psyche; the return of Psyche from Hades, borne by the attendants of Eros; the intercession of Eros for Psyche with Jupiter; and in a larger painting on the ceiling, Psyche drinks the cup of immortality in presence of the assembled deities. It is all classic and very pretty, but only valuable for its design.*

* C. and C.'s *Life of Raphael*.

RAPHAEL'S DRAMATIC PICTURES

THE short road of genius sometimes proves to be quite a long one. Raphael did not develop his dramatic talent very rapidly, or at equal intervals; and it was not until the papacy of Leo X. that he attained to the perfect bloom and fruition of it. This may have been partly owing to the class of paintings on which he was engaged, but how far he was permitted to choose his own subjects or how often they were dictated to him, we do not know.

The development of a drama either in poetry or painting requires a capability of looking at a subject from various points of view, and indicates not only an exceptional breadth of vision, but an impartial judgment, such as can deal with various discordant elements, and yet do full justice to every one of them. It is partially a gift which comes by nature, but also requires experience far more than does the lyric faculty.

There is a *Crucifixion* in the collection of Lord Dudley which Crowe and Cavalcaselle attribute to Raphael, but it is almost too immature a work to



THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON, BY RAPHAEL

Camera della Segnatura

deserve a place in the history of his development. It would seem to have been painted at the same age as the *Solly Madonna*, and we may presume it to have been little more than the reflection of the various Crucifixions which he had an opportunity of examining. The formality of its arrangement is more conspicuous from its size and the number of its figures than this would be in a simple Madonna.

The *Coronation of the Virgin* executed for the Oddi family, and now in the Vatican, was really Raphael's first dramatic painting. It is on wood, about nine by five feet, and is divided into a Coronation above and an Ascension beneath. There is, however, no very tangible connection between these two scenes, and the postures of the saints are decidedly academic. The expression of affectionate humility on the face of the Madonna seems more like Raphael, and the head of the Saviour is noble and dignified. Still more important are two cherubs resting on the clouds beneath; for their attitudes closely resemble those of the cherubs in the *Sistine Madonna*. The delicate painting of flowers and grasses about the grave from which the Madonna has arisen, is an early indication of Raphael's genuine love of nature.

The *Sposalizio* in the Brera at Milan was Raphael's next opportunity in the way of a dramatic composition. A marriage or a betrothal is not of itself a dramatic incident, but it became so in this case by the introduction of the disappointed suitors, one of whom is seen in the foreground breaking his rod across his knee, and others stand behind Joseph with jealous or disappointed looks. Mary, a woman of

evident superiority, holds out her hand, with a modest inclination of her head, while Joseph stands with one foot at right angles to the other like a man who is somewhat embarrassed. His attitude is closely allied to that of Perugino's Joseph in the *Sposalizio* at Caen. A retinue of ladies behind Mary balances the suitors on the other side; but the arrangement of all the figures is so easy and natural as to prevent this from being apparent. The composition has an atmosphere of youthful purity and blitheness. The figures are slight and lightly drawn.

In the background Raphael has constructed a symmetrical building, in appearance like a baptistry, which shows his talent for architecture, and relationship to Bramante. This design might still be made useful.

The *Sposalizio* was painted in Raphael's twenty-second year and represents his coming of age, as well as his emancipation from Perugino and the traditions of the Umbrian school. This appears notably in the figure of the Virgin, whose perfect head and graceful attitude may almost be considered an ideal, and the young man breaking the wand over his knee, whose spirited action gives force to the whole scene. It may be significant of Raphael's breaking loose from the conventionalities of religious painting. This, however, only came gradually; and the coloring of the *Sposalizio* is in the variegated style of the fifteenth century. If Leonardo had been called in to give his opinion of the picture, this at least would have received a severe sentence from him. One can imagine the dreamy

smile with which Raphael may have regarded it ten years later.

Nearly five years elapsed after this before the painting of Raphael's *Entombment*, now in the Borghese gallery. The number of studies he made for it and the different changes in them, show the thorough manner in which he prepared himself for his work, and perhaps also a feeling that he was treading on strange ground. With all his pains the picture cannot be called wholly a success. There are great elements in it, but they are not altogether in accord.

Raphael has found out how to conjure up grand ideas, but he has not learned how to dispose of them. The contrast between the vigorous action of the bearers of Christ and the classic repose of the mourners is almost startling. Nicodemus, who lifts the feet of the Saviour, is a youth of giant strength, and does it with such an air; as if he were about to attack a fortress. His figure is not perfectly drawn and yet it is magnificent. The body seems to be borne along, however, with much difficulty, and when we compare Tintoretto's more mature treatment of the subject, we perceive how unnecessary this is. Joseph of Arimathea stands behind the bearer at the head, in aspect like some Greek divinity, while the Madonna is fainting in the arms of three beautiful Marys. There are six women altogether in the scene, and though there are marks of grief on their faces, their beauty is more conspicuous than their sorrow.

Christ himself, as Grimm has observed, does not appear to be dead, nor even asleep, but like one in a trance, who is conscious of what goes on around him but unable to express himself in any way. This is so evident that it is of no avail trying to dispute it, and it is remarkable that Raphael at the age of twenty-five should have conceived the subject in such a manner. He was unacquainted with grief, but he recognized the inscrutable nature of pure spirit. This fact gives the work great importance, in spite of its faults and peculiarities. If it is somewhat academic, it does not fail in genius.

There is a sketch by Raphael in the Louvre of an Entombment or a Pieta, which I judge to have been made near the close of his stay in Florence, and which is greatly superior in design to the painted picture in the Borghese Palace. It may have been drawn as a study in connection with that, and perhaps discarded for a fancied resemblance to the marble *Pieta* of Michel Angelo; though the posture of Christ in the painting is much more like that.

I think the Christ also in this drawing is intended to appear in a trance. His head is in the lap of Mary, the mother of James, but the Madonna is close beside her and close to his body, supported tenderly by her aged mother, St. Anna. Above these three stands Joseph of Arimathea in a turban, an older and more dignified man than he appears in the *Entombment*. Which of the two younger women may be intended for the Magdalen, it is not easy to decide. She is usually represented as the most beautiful member of the group, and if so in

the present case, she would be the one leaning towards St. Anna; but I would prefer to believe that she is the one kneeling on the ground holding the body of the Saviour in her lap, with her left hand under his knee, and holding his left hand in her right, while she looks up at the Virgin with tender solicitude. I suppose this is the noblest attitude in which Raphael ever represented a woman,—the most pathetic and human. At the right, St. John is seen reverently approaching the group, with his hands clasped under his chin. The composition is in all respects harmonious, and its dramatic effect is fine.

Raphael certainly developed in Rome a genius, hitherto unknown among men of his craft, for the organization of industry. He enrolled under his banner all the talented young painters in the city, and led them forth like a young Alexander to conquer empires. He must have had a cool head to do this, for artists are commonly sensitive, excitable, and rather irritable persons, who much prefer to be left to their own devices. It is only thus indeed that they can concentrate themselves for their peculiar kind of work. They hold business affairs in contempt, and are very much annoyed by them. People who displeased or interfered with Michel Angelo found that they had better have stirred up a hornet's nest; and Perugino also had a pretty quick temper. But Raphael was very different. The busiest man in Rome, he always had plenty of time, and nothing seemed to annoy him. He was never more himself than in a congregation of other

artists, or among the high dignitaries of the papal court. He interested himself in his brother painters, and liked to help them. Instead of being jealous of him they loved him.

Vasari's statement that he had in his employ fifty excellent and well-reputed painters must be an exaggeration. No human faculty could devise plans enough to keep such a number occupied. Neither do we find the work performed that would justify such a statement. It is more likely that he employed fifty artists in all, at different times. Fifteen or twenty would be the most that Raphael could have given occupation to at once; and even these were more than a just regard for honest art could have warranted.

A wealthy Fleming, having learned that Rubens' scholars assisted him in the execution of his pictures, requested to have one painted wholly by his own hand, offering to pay an unusual price for it on that account. Rubens declined his offer, because he considered it would be a waste of time, and explained to the gentleman that there was an intermediate stage in the painting of a picture which did not require so much skill as its beginning and completion; and that his pictures would not be better if he painted every stroke upon them. The Rubens hall in the Pinacothek at Munich is a glorious place. There is every variety of painting in it, from a small *genre* picture to the largest historical composition; and it is difficult to decide which is the most perfectly finished or best represents the style of the master.

If the same could be said of Raphael's work in



"THE VIOLIN PLAYER," BY RAPHAEL

Galleria S. Luca, Rome

the Vatican, it would be more to the advantage of his fame and to our enjoyment when we go there. There can be no doubt that he employed too many assistants and often gave insufficient attention to what they were doing; the second evil being a necessary consequence of the first. Even the drawing would not always seem to have been his own, and while he finished some figures with a great deal of care, others were only slightly touched by him, or neglected altogether. While the general style of his painting pervades the whole series, there is too much of an inequality in the details. Sometimes his pupils imitated him and sometimes Michel Angelo, and their attempt to give his spiritual expression of countenance often resulted in an anomaly which was beyond the skill of Raphael to remedy. An instance of this may be noticed in the two angels who support the robes of a pope, who is said to be Urban IV., but who looks remarkably like Julius II. Their bodies are Raphaelesque but their arms in the style of Michel Angelo, while their faces have a look somewhat as if they had come out from a bath. It may be for the same reason that Raphael's work has not endured so well as that in the Sistine Chapel; for the Vatican has an atmosphere of its own which is almost as dry as that of Colorado.

In this way Raphael accomplished more work than Michel Angelo, but the quality was not so good. The mountain stream has become a tide river, valuable to commerce, but its water is no longer pure. While Michel Angelo was lying on his back in the Sistine Chapel with the paint from

his brush dropping on his face, Raphael was employed with a similar work called the *Disputa* on the ceiling of the Camera della Segnatura. Grimm has given an admirable analysis of this immense painting, and traced in it the course of Raphael's intellectual widening during his first two years in Rome. It possesses a metaphysical quality, which only a few are likely to perceive, but which gives it, for those few, an exceptional value. Raphael interested himself in philosophy at twenty-five, as Schiller did at thirty, and the same must have been true at nearly the same age for Shakspeare.

Philosophy is the capstone of a well-developed mind, and the best kind of work in art or literature cannot be accomplished without its help. What we learn in the universities is not sufficient, and the true scholar must go through an independent course of study, and form his own opinions irrespective of the professors. The fit properly comes upon him like a fever, and he emerges from it quite another man. The metaphysical discussions in *Troilus and Cressida* may be irrelevant to the plot, but without this preparatory effort we should not have had *Hamlet*, where Shakspeare's profound thoughts fall into their proper places. The *Disputa* leads in a similar manner to the *School of Athens*, which is the most celebrated of Raphael's frescos. Neither of them are properly dramatic pictures, for they contain no dramatic action. They are contemplative works which accord with Raphael's mental condition at this time; and they prepare the way for those which follow, as fresh thought stimulates to action.

CAMERA DELLA SEGNATURA.

The manner in which Raphael laid out his work in the Camera della Segnatura not only attests the breadth of his mind, but rare confidence in his ability to accomplish whatever he undertook. He was barely twenty-six, and yet he suddenly rose from small Florentine panel-work to frescos of the grandest magnitude. As the chamber has two walls larger and more unbroken than the others, on one he designed the celebrated *School of Athens* and opposite to it the *Disputa*, an immense religious allegory containing nearly forty figures. On the other sides *Parnassus* and *Jurisprudence* were painted above and around the windows. Over these larger works he designed smaller groups; respectively, *Philosophy*, *Theology*, *Poetry*, and *Justice*. One would suppose that he might have spent a lifetime on these subjects.

In the *Disputa*, which was Raphael's first design here, we meet with those influences which we have already recognized in his Tuscan work, and also a new one which above all was most nearly akin to his own nature,—the influence of Greek sculpture. We discover in it, besides, the transition of Raphael's mind from his narrower Florentine life to Roman grandeur and magnificence. These different elements could not of course be made to harmonize at once, and resulted in a certain inequality of design, a disproportion in the figures, which is only partially atoned for by a skilful architectural arrangement. The group surrounding *Theology*, who is represented

by a beautiful young woman with a book on her lap seated on the clouds, is quite as Florentine in character as the *Madonna of the Meadow*; while the figure of Christ in the upper centre of the *Disputa* has a breadth of design and unclothed dignity which denotes an escape from Florentine traditions, just as his earnestness of expression suggests more serious contemplation. A lapse of fifty years separates this figure from that of the Heavenly Father, half enveloped in the clouds above.* Here Raphael has returned to the traditions of the fifteenth century, and this is made more plainly apparent by the bodiless cherubs which form a large circle about Jehovah. The golden rays and the stars which fill the adjoining spaces belong to the time of Fra Angelico.

In this heavenly assemblage *Theology* holds the first place as a perfectly conceived ideal, and is even more beautiful than any of Raphael's Florentine Madonnas. † Of similar, if not of equal quality, are the boy angels who hover about the central group and in the starry empyrean above.

More original, and a more harmonious design, is the concourse of apostles and other holy men on the earth beneath. St. Peter and St. Paul stand forth as conspicuous leaders of the two groups, while Adam, Abraham, Moses, and David are readily distinguished. A golden haze appears to descend upon them from above, typifying the inspiration which comes to spiritually gifted natures. Here more vigor, freedom, and breadth of design are ap-

* C. and C.'s *Life of Raphael*.

† See Grimm's description.

parent; so that by following the course of Raphael's work from the ceiling downward, his art almost seems to develop and expand before our eyes.

On the clouds above *Parnassus*, presides a beautiful sibylline figure representing Poetry, with a book on her knee and with her left hand resting on a lyre. Her drawing is antique, as also that of the two-winged spirits that accompany her. This is not so decided, however, as to seem incongruous, and the appearance of the model of Raphael's Nazarene Madonnas among the Muses preserves the connection with Florentine traditions.

Raphael painted a broad, semicircular arch across the wall, through which we seem to be looking at the poetic congregation. This suggests the effect of a landscape seen through and under a rainbow. The whole scene has an atmosphere of vernal freshness, which, when the coloring was new, must have been delightful and charming.

The finest group in this painting is formed by the poets who surround Homer, especially the two at his left hand, whom I take to be Virgil and Ariosto. Homer himself, towering above all others, with up-raised face, has a good deal of majesty; but Dante looks too short, and has not the refined, classic profile of Giotto's portrait. The grouping of *Parnassus* is much more natural than in the *Disputa*, and this would suggest an intermediate position between the *Disputa* and the *School of Athens*.

The drawing is no less worthy of Raphael; and

yet this painting suffers from a single incongruity which it is impossible to overlook.

On the front frieze of the Parthenon the twelve greater divinities were represented in a row, the male nude and the female draped from shoulder to ankle; but this does not offend our sense of elegance, because of their antique and simple costume and the lack of everything like modern decoration. In his *Parnassus*, however, Raphael has represented a nearly nude Apollo surrounded by nine well-dressed Muses, with *coiffures* in the style of his own time. The ancient and the modern world here come too sharply into collision, and we feel that the contrast is not a pleasant one.

The architecture which Raphael designed for the *School of Athens* impresses us with a delightful sense of space,—much like the interior of Milan Cathedral. If this was according to Bramante's plan for the interior of St. Peter's, it is greatly to be regretted that he did not live to carry it into effect. In addition to breadth, it gives what St. Peter's does not, in spite of its size,—a sense of loftiness and stately elegance.

This magnificent work has suffered so much from repainting that in many instances the attitudes are all that remains to us, even the outlines having been spoiled by an unskilful use of the brush. Raphael's faces seem to look at us appealingly from beneath the paint with which they are covered; only here and there are we able to distinguish clearly their noble lineaments. Among them all, none have

suffered more severely than the figures of Plato and Aristotle. One has a magnificent leonine head, suggestive of the *Zeus* of Otricoli, but his expression is no longer visible. His drapery is remarkably like St. Paul's, in the St. Cecilia group; but, for all that, I do not believe that he represents St. Paul or Aristotle either, but Plato. He is not beckoning with his hand, but pointing heavenward; while the person next him is holding his arm straight forward, and level with the earth. This must be Aristotle; and what gestures could be more characteristic of their respective schools of philosophy. Plato says it is self-consciousness which indicates the divine origin of man, and Aristotle replies: "Let us investigate also the origin of things about us." * His face is even less distinguishable than Plato's, but both were originally ideals of the highest type.

At the right of Plato there is a small group of his disciples in echelon; and beyond these, Socrates, somewhat idealized but unmistakably Socrates, is explaining something to another small group in which Alcibiades is easily recognized by his Grecian helmet and voluptuous manner; a better Alcibiades could not be imagined. At the extreme left there is another group through which an almost naked, poetic-looking youth is hurrying forward with a book and a roll of parchment in his hand, while an older person standing near him holds out his hand in a gesture of moderation. The former may be a

* The opposition between these two philosophers is only in regard to particular points. Aristotle was also an idealist.

messenger who has been sent to fetch some valuable document. His action is very spirited, and by no means overdrawn. He serves as a contrast to the self-conscious dignity of Alcibiades, and also to a stout gentleman seated in front, whose head (not unlike Luther's) is crowned with a wreath of oak. He is soberly reading a large quarto, with a handsome boy-page on either side of him. Raphael has bestowed all the repose of his own nature on this sturdy thinker, who is sufficiently original in himself, but whose situation recalls vividly the prophets and their attendant spirits of the Sistine Chapel.

Since Michel Angelo's frescos were uncovered for the first time in 1510, it is safe to presume that the *School of Athens* was not finished until 1511 or possibly later.

There are other figures in this painting which plainly indicate the influence of Michel Angelo, while there are none either in the *Disputa* or the *Parnassus*; for the *Disputa* at least was completed before the Sistine Chapel was open to visitors. Diogenes, scantily clad, is lying on the steps in front of Plato in an appropriate attitude. Pythagoras stands on the left, and Ptolemy on the right. Archimedes stoops over to demonstrate a problem on the floor, and is said to be painted in the image of Bramante, but only his bald cranium with patches of hair above the ears is visible. The philosopher looking over the shoulder of Pythagoras is supposed to be Boethius. Raphael has introduced a large number of young men among the thinkers, and quite

correctly, for it is to the young that intellectual reformers appeal, and among whom they find their most zealous adherents; but many of these have rather a sentimental expression, and an attitude as if they were posing for their portraits. The beautiful youth beneath Socrates (he is looking out of the picture) may be intended for Charmides, who is interrogated in Plato's first dialogue. Perhaps this was Raphael's conception of the young Athenians of whom Plato and Xenophon wrote. Still one would think that he would have preferred more manly types. That they should appear self-conscious and not strictly attentive to the proceedings is natural enough. Yet it is a magnificent work, and marks an advance beyond the *Disputa* in its perfect grouping and greatness of design. Plato, Aristotle, Alcibiades, and a number more are drawn in the grand manner.

In the right-hand lower corner there is a distinguished group of four persons who appear to be holding a separate conference by themselves. You will frequently see such side groups at public meetings. One of them is easily recognized. There can be no question as to his identity. He is Leonardo da Vinci, reproduced from the Florentine portrait, only with this difference,—his eyes are turned to the left instead of to the right. He is in better preservation than most of the figures in this fresco, but by no means equal to the original; nor do I believe that a portrait in fresco can rival one in oil on equal terms. The nearest face to Leonardo is supposed to be Raphael himself, and he has the same profile

and bird-like expression of the eye as in the Uffizi portrait. Close to Raphael's left shoulder stands a man who has been recognized as Perugino, but the profiles of the two are suspiciously alike. He is much older, stouter, and has a rather more worldly, practical look; but the family likeness is very decided. We do not hear that Raphael was nearly or distantly related to Perugino, and this likeness may have been the result of an ignorance of Perugino's features seen from that point of view. His face, like Leonardo's, was probably painted from memory. Between him we call Perugino and Leonardo there is an elegant, princely figure, with a spiked coronet on his head. He cannot be identified, as only the lower portion of his face is visible, and therefore must have been introduced for artistic effect. His neck is drawn with two curved lines of exquisite grace, and some mathematician ought to examine those curves and study their properties. It is possible that a human being might have such a neck, just as an oval face is possible; but this personage is an ideal.

In the *School of Athens* the two most prominent figures are described by Vasari as Plato and Aristotle, and this statement is supported indirectly by the female figure above the painting, who is labelled *Cognitio Causarum*; but some connoisseurs have concluded that these two *dramatis personæ* are intended for Peter and Paul, and that they are represented here expounding the doctrines of Christianity to the learned men of Greece and Rome. If this



"ENTOMBMENT," BY RAPHAEL

Borghese Gallery, Rome

interpretation, however, be correct, in what way is the motto *Cognitio Causarum* to be explained ?

Herman Grimm's argument for Peter and Paul is that the *persona* formerly supposed to be Aristotle is standing with his arm raised in a gesture like that of an orator, and St. Paul was the great pleader of the Christian cause, surpassing all the disciples of Christ in eloquence and education. But how are we to understand the names *Etica* and *Fisico* which are inscribed on the two volumes held by these prominent individuals ? Ethics might bear some relation to the teaching of Paul and Peter, but physics could not possibly do so. These inscriptions apply accurately to the writings of Plato and Aristotle, one of whom may be said to have founded modern ethics, and the other, through his analysis of the reasoning faculty, opened the highway to modern science. This corresponds perfectly with the motto above the picture, for the investigation of causes was the special endeavor of Hellenic philosophy. Again we are obliged to admire the breadth and catholicity of Raphael's mind.

The appellation of *Furisprudence* has been given to the fourth important painting in the Camera della Segnatura, on account of the figure of Justice which presides above it ; but it is really an allegorical composition containing a group of figures which represent those virtues which are of especial service in practical affairs. Prudence is seated on a marble plinth beneath Justice, and on either side at her feet are Strength and Moderation ; the one caressing the

head of a lion and holding an oak branch in her other hand, both adequate symbols; while the other holds up a bridle to signify the control of our desires. Both are attended by small *genii*, which, though Raphaelesque in drawing, remind us of the Sistine Chapel. A naked child looking toward the spectator is the most perfect figure in this group.

Not satisfied with such a wealth of decoration—if decoration be not too weak a word—Raphael represented on the ceiling four subjects appropriate to the paintings on the walls: *The Fall of Man, Marsyas and Apollo, The Creation of the Planets*, and *The Judgment of Solomon*. Of these the last is much the finest design; and indeed it is rather unpleasant to associate Raphael with his treatment of the Apollo and Marsyas fable in this instance. Apollo is being crowned with a wreath of victory by the shepherds, while the naked Marsyas is fastened by his arms and feet to a tree preparatory to the operation of being flayed. It shows how far Raphael could have been from having a realizing sense of the terrible punishments that were inflicted in his time. They were only too real and terrible to Michel Angelo's mind: but Raphael was optimistic; he avoided melancholy thoughts and had never listened to the fiery eloquence of Savonarola.

The *Judgment of Solomon* may be considered Raphael's first entirely successful dramatic work. It is so strictly classic that it might even be compared to the *Alcestis* of Euripides. Only four persons are represented in it besides the babe, and they

play their parts to perfection. Solomon's face is in profile, so that we do not see its expression, but he emphasizes his order by a vertical movement of the hands. The executioner, a fully developed athlete, holds the child at arm's length, and grasps with the other hand a weapon which Raphael would seem to have invented for the purpose. (We should know Raphael had designed it if we discovered it in Arabia.) His brutal face is turned from us, so that we may better admire his fine physique. The action of the mother is magnificent. She springs forward to interpose herself before the threatened blow, and turns to Solomon with a look of frenzied entreaty. The false mother, kneeling on the ground, holds out her hands with a gesture of pretended unconcern.

The composition reminds us of the ingenious arrangement of Raphael's early groups—especially of the *Holy Family* at Munich. Solomon's face is in profile, for he has not yet come to a decision. The face of the good woman is turned toward us; that of the wicked woman away from us. There is a moment of terrible suspense, but we know it will be followed by joy, and the consummation of justice. The picture is not less remarkable in its perfect balance of forces than for its powerful contrasts.

CAMERA DEL' ELIODORO.

There is a kind of anachronism in painting which does no mischief to a picture, and may even be of advantage; but there is another sort which is highly

injurious. The representation of a young, intelligent mother in her everyday costume as a Madonna (if she deserves the honor) does not conflict with our sense of propriety. The simplicity of her attire gives it a universal application to all times and civilized countries, and we even prefer such pictures to those modern studies that would restore the mother of Christ to us as she actually appeared. Very different is the effect produced by introducing three Venetian senators with their robes of state in the *Adoration of the Magi*. The antithesis is too startling for us; we fall from the pleasant cloudland of the past on to the hard ground of the present; all romance, all illusion, is dispelled by it.

Raphael would appear to have had his own way in the Camera della Segnatura without interference. The subjects there are characteristic of him, and are wrought out in that spirit of classic repose which was the keynote of his nature. Perhaps he had carried this as far as it would go, and some external pressure was necessary in order to divert the full passion of his interest into a different channel. The three paintings in the Segnatura have a universal character; they now are and always will be; but those in the Camera del' Eliodoro refer to particular historic events, and are full of action and excitement. In the *Expulsion of Heliodorus* from the temple and the *Miracle at Bolsena*, Julius II. appears with a number of church dignitaries living at that time; and in the *Exorcism of Attila*, Leo X. is represented with the Swiss Guard in their well-known uniform. Every one notices the discordance that arises from

the introduction of these celebrated men in scenes which were enacted hundreds of years before their time.

The *Expulsion of Heliodorus* is the most dramatic of Raphael's larger frescos, and next to the *School of Athens* the most interesting. Its design is admirable, but the painted picture suffers from two serious evils. At the second glance we discover that the group of Heliodorus and that of the affrighted spectators were painted by different hands, and though Raphael may have attempted to harmonize them, the discord could not be wholly remedied. Quite as questionable is his introduction of Pope Julius and his attendants in the temple at Jerusalem. The occasion for this, and the vanity which prompted it, occurs to us immediately. Heliodorus, the satrap of Seleucus, in attempting to rob the Jewish temple of its treasure, is said to have been attacked by celestial warriors, who recovered the gold and drove him and his attendants forth. Raphael has represented one of the angelic defenders on horseback in Roman armor, and two others are on foot but walking on the air. Their action is very spirited, and the prostrate attitude of Heliodorus, holding up his right arm in defence against the trampling horseman, is worthy of the drawing of Leonardo, and one of the most difficult positions that Raphael attempted. Near Julius II. is a graceful group of women and children who have taken refuge in the temple and are expressing their astonishment by animated gestures. The foremost

woman, kneeling on the floor, is nearly repeated again in the *Transfiguration*. The grand cavernous architecture is well suited to our ideas of the Hebrew house of worship, and Raphael has introduced the seven-pronged candlestick of the Jews as it appears on a bas-relief in the arch of Titus.

In the *Expulsion of Heliodorus* Raphael attempted to harmonize the work of his assistants by a skilful use of his own brush after they had finished. This, however, was not wholly successful, and in the *Miracle at Bolsena* he adopted a different method; evidently painting the central portion of the fresco with its more important personages himself, and leaving the surrounding portion to others.* The miracle is nothing more than the trick of turning a chemical substance into a liquid resembling blood,—the miracle of St. Januarius.

Julius II. appears here again as the central figure, and opposite to him Cardinal Medici, afterwards Clement VII., with a number of attendant pages,—all kneeling together. Never was Raphael's style more pure, or his skill more perfectly sustained, than we find it in this group. It is simply the finest art in the whole series of the *Camere*, and the finest portrait we have of Julius II., who appears here with a longer beard, older, and more benignant than in the easel paintings. His expression is dramatic and very remarkable; his eye has a surprised but determined expression, as of a man who knew how to be master in every emergency. Even the paint-

* C. and C.'s *Life of Raphael*.

ing of his sleeve seems miraculous. Neither is Cardinal Medici, who holds the blood-stained wafer, treated in a less deserving manner; and the attendant pages, kneeling in their white muslin vestments, have that spiritual grace which seems almost supernatural. The remainder of the fresco might be compared to the side scenes of a theatre, which serve as a setting to the living persons who act between them. It is a composition of fine, delicate contrasts, of admirably balanced grouping, and possesses a decided advantage in representing ecclesiastical life as it appeared in Raphael's own time.

The fable of Attila's being driven out of Italy by divine interposition is represented on the wall opposite the *Expulsion of Heliodorus*. The scene is laid between the Cœlian and Palatine hills by the side of the Tiber, though the event is supposed to have taken place in northern Italy. Here Leo X. appears instead of Julius II., so that the painting must have been finished after the winter of 1513. It is executed on similar lines to the preceding. The figures of Leo, Attila, and of the two apostle spirits threatening the infidel invader must have been finished by Raphael himself; while there can be no less doubt that he left the Swiss Guards and other generic personages entirely to his assistants. Leo is certainly painted with all Raphael's skill. The apostles hovering in the air above him are interesting as a prediction of Raphael's Moses and Elijah in the *Transfiguration*. Attila wheels his horse with a simple and effective gesture of alarm, and the con-

fusion in the Tartar horde is well expressed, though by an inferior hand—the design, of course, being Raphael's own.

The *Deliverance of St. Peter* is painted on the wall above the windows, and is one of the most poetic and restful of Raphael's Vatican frescos. The saint appears in it twice, and Raphael has made a success of this presentation, all rules of art to the contrary. The moonlight streams in through a doorway and is reflected on the armor of the guards, who are spiritually hypnotized, while the radiant angel awakes St. Peter in his cell. Then the two appear again in a passageway, the angel leading Peter, on whose face there is an expression of pious joy. There are three noble presentations of Peter: this one by Raphael, Leonardo's in his *Last Supper*, and Tintoretto's in his great *Crucifixion*. Leonardo's is the genuine Peter, for he has the physiognomy of a Jew, and is moreover suggestive of the saying, "On this rock will I found my Church"; but we can never forget the manly solicitude of Tintoretto's Peter over the swooning Mary, or the aspect of grave holiness in the face of Raphael's. He is not an ideal, but more like the portrait of a Roman senator, one of the Antonines perhaps. Yet we admire him for his whole personality rather than for any one quality or virtue.

It is said to be Raphael's best work in *chiaroscuro*, the *Disputa* with its far-reaching landscape coming next in order. The bright, awakening splendor of the angel is contrasted with the peaceful rays of the



POPE LEO X, BY RAPHAEL

Uffizzi Gallery, Florence

moon, which seem to invite the prisoner forth into the fields and groves. It is Raphael's one perfect fresco in the Vatican, and a companion to the unfinished cartoons.

Michel Angelo was not the first to endow the divine image with an athletic figure, as may be seen on the ceiling of the *Eliodoro*, where in *Jacob's Dream* the Almighty appears in a form like that of an intellectual pancratiast. This, however, does not recall the Sistine Chapel, as the same presence does in Raphael's painting of the *Burning Bush*. The appearance of God to Noah is treated in a pleasing domestic manner; and the most interesting of this series is the *Sacrifice of Isaac*, in which a beautiful angel dashes down in full flight to present the substitute of a lamb, while another angel quietly seizes the upraised arm of Abraham. Here, as in the deliverance of Peter, Raphael was in his proper element.

CAMERA DEL' INCENDIO.

Generally the most satisfactory pictures are those containing a moderate number of figures. After the Camera Eliodoro, Raphael left all such prosaic, overgrown subjects as the *Oath of Leo III.* and the *Coronation of Charlemagne* to his well-trained corps of assistants. They are not dramatic compositions of the highest order—representing quantity rather than quality of conception, with the poetic element quite left out; and it is only the rarest technical skill that can give such work an exceptional value. His influence is discernible in them, and he must have made the preparatory sketches, as well as

drawn some of the principal figures with his own hand. The *Fire in the Borgo*, which gives its name to this chamber, is more interesting to us, as everything must be which relates directly to human feeling and action, and evidently was so to Raphael. It has the same dramatic character as the *Miracle at Bolsena*. The group of women, who have escaped from the flames and are imploring assistance from the Pope, has an admirable arrangement—agitated mothers and terrified daughters rendered with dignity and true feminine grace. At the extreme left there is a group which every reader of Virgil will recognize. A stalwart-looking man, almost nude, is carrying out his father, or some aged or infirm person, on his back, while a boy of ten or twelve years runs by his side, and a mysterious woman in Grecian costume follows behind. The idea of course is taken from the escape of Æneas with Anchises and the little Iulus from the sacking of Troy; and it is another tribute to the fine imagination of the Latin poet. The drawing is not of the best, for the arms of the boy are slightly too large for his body, and the young man does not carry his burden so easily as a strong person might; but it is a poetic scene, and the hand of Raphael is distinctly visible in it. The firelight adds a romance of its own, and I think that Raphael must also have painted the sidewalk under their feet, so solid and real is its appearance.

THE CARTOONS.

Goethe considered the cartoons the only works of Raphael which could be compared with those of

Michel Angelo. The opinion of so rare a critic, well versed in the knowledge of all arts, is of the highest value to us; but what did Goethe mean by this? The cartoons were then, as now, at Hampton Court, and Goethe could never have seen them. The tapestries that were made from them he must have seen at Dresden, and perhaps also in the Vatican, but they are now so much faded that it is no less than a penance to investigate them, and they could not have been in much better condition a hundred years ago. It was the engravings from these subjects that Goethe undoubtedly was thinking of when he made the foregoing statement; and it proves the importance which he attached to the design of a work of art, even when separated from technical excellence.

Goethe was one of the world's great dramatists, and he became interested in other arts by viewing them from the standpoint of his own. It was the dramatic character of the cartoons which appealed to him so strongly, and led him to estimate them more highly than Raphael's most skilfully finished paintings. No one could judge of this so well, for he was not only a poet but stage manager of the Grand Duke's theatre, and he had practiced the best actors in their gestures and the positions they ought to occupy on the stage at the critical moments of the play. He knew the difficulty with which this knowledge is acquired, and he respected Raphael as his own equal in the dramatic art.

One especial advantage which the cartoons possess consists in their being of the right dimensions. They

are not so large but that we can readily comprehend the action that is represented on them. Where more than ten or twelve figures are drawn together the eye is obliged to separate them into different groups, and in passing from one group to another the sense of unity is lost. There are half a dozen groups in Tintoretto's *Paradise*, which, if framed separately, would attract universal admiration, but it requires an effort of concentration to appreciate them now, amid so great an assemblage. It is the same in dramatic poetry. The best tragedies are those in which the *dramatis personæ* is limited and the same characters constantly reappear.

There is a peculiar charm to these delicately tinted pictures. They have an atmosphere similar to that of Claude Lorraine. Though they are handled in a slight manner, they seem more substantial than some of Raphael's highly finished paintings. The background is always delightful, whether it be a landscape or fine architecture. They are all interesting studies, but here we have only time and space to consider three of them, which are the most dissimilar in character.

Christ's Charge to Peter. A dramatic moment is one which unites the future with the past and is related significantly to both. It must result from the collision of two forces, though these are not necessarily antagonistic. In this picture we have one of the forces represented by the Saviour, and the other by his disciples, who are gathered in a single group, from which Christ stands somewhat apart. He

wishes to indicate to them what their future work in the world shall be, and selects Peter as the strongest character among them—the one on whom he can best rely for the advancement of Christianity. He therefore asks him three times: “ Simon, dost thou love me ? ” until Peter falls on his knees to give earnestness to his assertion. Then says the Saviour: “ Feed my sheep ”; that is, be a shepherd unto my people. This is the dramatic moment. It confers on Peter the leadership of Christ’s little band, and proclaims him to the others as Christ’s successor. Raphael has, therefore, represented Peter in the act of receiving the keys, though this is not mentioned in the Bible.

Raphael introduced a flock of sheep in the middle distance, and it has been inferred from this that he interpreted the words of the Saviour too literally; but no one ever understood the meaning of this passage better. There are too many fine symbolisms invented by Raphael himself to permit us to believe otherwise. The sheep are introduced to identify the subject, which might otherwise remain in doubt. Their animal indifference serves also as an artistic contrast to the intelligent animation of the group of disciples. The flock of sheep is itself a symbol to represent the mass of mankind, who follow after custom and tradition as sheep follow the bell-wether; while the apostles are the remnant who think for themselves, and will save and enlighten the world in Christ’s name.

John and James press forward to urge the sincerity of their devotion, and they are almost imitated

in form and action by the two apostles behind them. The others look on reflectively, or turn to inquire: "What is the meaning of this, and why is Peter distinguished from the rest?" Among the last there is a powerful head, which is nearly identical with Albert Dürer's *St. Matthew* in the Pinacothek at Munich. It seems as if Raphael must have borrowed it, but how he could have done so is not clear. The last is a dark-looking personage, whose face is concealed, and may have been intended for Judas.

They are arranged nearly in two rows, so that ten out of the twelve are distinctly visible. There was no one like Raphael to give a formal arrangement a natural appearance. They are a noble set of men, and yet when we compare them with the faces in the *Last Supper* at Milan, we are obliged to recognize in this line at least Leonardo's superiority. His St. Peter may not be more earnest, or his St. John more refined than Raphael's, but they are more intellectual and highly developed.

Yet it is a powerful group, and to counterpoise it the Saviour stands apart with grave classic dignity, like the statue of *Demosthenes* in the Vatican. He is slender and his face comparatively narrow and beardless, his hair falling with rare grace upon his shoulders. Nothing could indicate more plainly how little consideration was paid by the Renaissance artists to any particular type of Christ. If separated from the picture, few would ever suspect for whom this figure was intended. His head is not so impressive as that of Matthew, nor are his features so regular as John's, and yet Raphael has given his

face a decided superiority. We like this impersonation of Christ, because there is no apparent effort in it to create something superhuman. His form is relieved by a very deep shadow, a shadow like one of Tintoretto's, which almost hides his right arm. The attitude and drapery of Peter are also exceedingly fine. Nothing could be more perfect than the way in which a fold of his mantle falls across his back. Although there are so many figures the shadows are divided into three principal masses, which have a kind of beauty of their own.

The sheep are woolly and submissive, after the nature of those animals; and the grass and a cactus in the foreground are painted with such accuracy as modern artists would consider a waste of time. The landscape stretches far away and fades gently into the glimmering horizon. There is an elevation in the distance rising above the heads of the disciples, and its summit is directly above the Saviour.

Such a picture possesses an intrinsic superiority over such works as the *Parnassus*, the *Mass at Bolsena*, and the *Fire in the Borgo*.

The *Miraculous Draught of Fishes* is related to *Christ's Charge to Peter* as the flower is to the fruit. The scene is on the lake at Galilee; a very peaceful scene;—the opposite shore, which resembles the banks of the Rhine, melting into the distance, with two gulls flying overhead and a number of herons in the immediate foreground.

The Saviour and five disciples fill two small boats, which are also laden with fish. The face of the

Saviour is seen obliquely, and its expression is hidden; for here the dramatic action is centred in Peter, whose appealing look and attitude is of the finest. He is down on his knees among the fish, for he has doubted his Master's prophetic power, and is desolated with remorse. Christ perceives in this the spiritual depth of Peter's nature,—his quick conscience, as well as his self-reliance,—and recognizes the depth and solidity of his nature as never before.

Otherwise it is a scene of rough and vigorous life. James, with naked limbs and unkempt hair, is balancing himself with his hands as he steps into the Saviour's boat. In the second boat two young men are bending over to haul in a net, and a third is making good use of an oar or pole, apparently to prevent the boat from drifting. As in the preceding picture the action is increased by the lively interest of the disciples, so here it is thrown into relief by their indifference.

The *Draught of Fishes* has the advantage of a rarely beautiful landscape, but is not without some peculiarities. The head of Christ is smaller than the others, and being without definite expression is rather disappointing. The disciple with the oar, too, is naked to the waist, and reminds us again of Michel Angelo's drawing. However, the attitude of the two fishermen who are hauling at the net, with their heads nearly touching the water and their backs bent as far as possible, is very effective. As for the attitude of James, balancing the boat and himself at the same time, I think if I were to choose between that and the *Apollo Belvedere*, I should

certainly prefer St. James the fisherman. Even the herons are interesting in their attitudes and familiarity.

There are also curious artistic contrivances in this cartoon. One of the herons is much shorter than the other, and this is evidently to prevent his beak from interfering with the hands of the saints on the net. It can only be explained by supposing that the bird is standing in a hole under the water. In both pictures Raphael has represented Christ and his disciples with a slight shadowy aureole, but he has omitted it in the case of one of the two men at the net; apparently because it would have to be painted against the head next to him.

The smallness of the boats has often attracted attention, and they are also too near the shore for the business in hand. It is doubtful if three men could float in a boat of that size, and they certainly could not haul a net from it without the aid of a miracle. The composition is so well balanced that we do not observe this at first, but after we have become conscious of it we cannot help thinking of it. The case has been argued on the ground that the scene could not be represented without some sacrifice of realism, and that Raphael has chosen the least among a number of evils. This may be true; but I always feel that Raphael would have given a stronger, more virile tone to the picture if he had adhered more closely to nature. The shore might have been omitted, and this would have given a sense of deeper water and of the loneliness of the sea. The boats might have been deeper

and, by turning one of them an angle of thirty degrees, longer, without taking up more space; the feet of the disciples would still be on a level with the water.

The treatment of the cartoons throughout bears a definite relation to bas-relief work, and they might have been used as designs for bas-relief quite as well as for tapestry. The *Charge to Peter* especially, if reduced in size, might have served as a panel in the gates of Ghiberti.

These two landscape cartoons illustrate the difference between light and shade, and what is called *chiaroscuro*. It is similar to the difference between *greatness* and *grandeur*. They have ærial perspective and the shadows are excellent, and yet the figures are not separated one from another, and from the background, as Correggio and Titian would have separated them. The figures seem rather to be on the surface as in bas-relief work. This is perhaps because the cartoons were painted to be imitated in tapestry.

The best of the cartoons, and one which Emerson particularly admired, is the *Sacrifice at Lystra*. Here Raphael has invented his finest architectural background, and one which gives a satisfactory notion of the artistic civilization in Asia Minor, which was wiped out by the Saracen conquest. The scene is also representative of the time, costumes and other details being reproduced with faithful accuracy.

The teachings of the Greek philosophers had undermined the old order of religious belief, and the faith of the people had become like a pent-up stream seeking a new outlet. So when Paul has cured the man who cannot walk, they cry out, "This must be a god who can perform a miracle," and bring in an ox to sacrifice to him. A fine athletic fellow kneels down holding the ox by one horn, while another sacrificer raises an axe to give the deadly blow.

A motley crowd has collected, and among them is just one spiritual-minded person who comprehends the situation of affairs. Paul and Barnabas do not at first understand what the good people are intending, but when the axe is raised they turn their heads aside with dignified aversion. The intellectual young man perceives this, and springs forward with outstretched arm to arrest the blow. This is the dramatic moment that Raphael has selected for his design.

This cartoon is full of noble contrasts. The grand figures of Paul and Barnabas, between the columns of a Greek porch, appear to better advantage from the group of mysteriously shrouded augurs, who represent a traditional spirituality from which the vitality has departed. The intellectual superiority of the young man who is endeavoring to prevent the sacrifice, is as clearly distinguished from the *vis inertia* of the crowd about him. One, in whom curiosity prevails above passing events, is lifting up the garment of the man who has been healed to examine the change in his condition.

In the midst of all stands the great patient ox, unconscious of the mortal danger that threatens him. To every creature that Raphael cared for he imparted in the drawing something of his own nature, and he has given to this fine animal an affectionate treatment which has been denied to the shadowy and sedate augurs. Two innocent children, playing on small pipes, stand by an elegantly wrought altar and relieve the scene, with their pretty faces, from a too severe tension.

No genius can create a great picture or poem from a subject that is common or superficial. His plot must have a deep significance, as the oak strikes its roots far into the earth. One of the chief distinctions between Christianity and the more realistic faith which it superseded was the abolition of animal sacrifices. When the Christians at length obtained control of the Roman empire, the pagans still formed a powerful party, and in order to conciliate them many pagan observances were adopted into the ritual of Jesus, but animal sacrifices came to an end forever. Next in importance to the divine unity, and the precept of the golden rule, comes this release of mankind from the influence of such brutalizing observances. This is what Raphael represented in the *Sacrifice at Lystra*.

THE BATTLE OF THE MILVIAN BRIDGE.

The fresco in the Vatican of the battle between Constantine and Maxentius was painted by Giulio Romano and Pierino del Vaga after Raphael's death ;



"DONNA VELATA," BY RAPHAEL

Pitti Gallery, Florence

but as he was himself at work on the *Transfiguration* when the fatal illness seized him, it is presumable that his sketches of the *Battle of the Milvian Bridge* were made at some time previous. I think we may consider the *Transfiguration* as Raphael's last work on earth.

Raphael had obtained a commission from the Pope to make systematic excavations among the Roman ruins, evidently in the hope of discovering more perfect treasures of Greek art than those which had already been exhumed. It was in this way, apparently, that he caught the fever which proved fatal to him.

The *Pons Milvius*, or Kite's Bridge, is familiarly known to travellers as the Ponte Molle, over which the highway runs from Rome to Florence. The battle which took place there between Constantine and Maxentius was one of the three most important victories of ancient times, but it is rarely mentioned because the history of the Roman empire is so little studied in our schools and colleges. For three centuries after the crucifixion of Jesus the sect which he founded endured humiliation and martyrdom, till at length this single victory gave it a political supremacy. It was an Austerlitz and a Gettysburg in one. Who will not say that warfare is glorious?

In point of interest this picture comes next to the *Expulsion of Heliodorus* among Raphael's frescos, but we should carefully distinguish between the spirited design of the master and the often faulty execution of his pupils.

The historical statement is that, after his defeat, Maxentius was crowded off the Milvian Bridge in the press of fugitives, and fell into the Tiber, and is now lying in its mud with his gilded armor, a fine specimen for some geologist in the distant future.

Raphael has deviated slightly from historical truth, as he had a perfect right to do, in order to give the scene a dramatic character. Crowe and Cavalcaselle are mistaken in identifying Maxentius in the gashed and lifeless corpse falling head downwards from the bank. He is easily recognized by his spiked crown, clinging desperately to his horse in an attempt to swim the Tiber, a feat never yet accomplished on horseback, so far as we know.

As a frame to the picture Raphael has designed on each side the figure of a statue on a high pedestal, against which are leaning two allegorical women, one of whom is designated as *Justice*, and the other with upturned eyes and a Hebrew scroll is intended for *Religion*. Whoever painted the latter did himself much credit, for it is scarcely excelled in the Vatican. There is a border of tapestry painted above, and the edges of curtains at the sides, which give the picture the effect of a scene at the theatre.

Raphael has designed this subject with consummate skill. He has not represented the battle, which must have taken place at least half a mile away, but the final triumph of Constantine and the cross. At the extreme right is seen the bridge with

the Roman standards retreating across it. Others are attempting to cross the Tiber in a boat, at the same time defending themselves with their shields against the Christian bowmen. Still nearer, Maxentius and others are struggling in the water. The rear-guard of the pagans is making a desperate stand to protect Maxentius and the passage over the bridge.

Constantine is in the very centre of the picture. He is leading a flank movement to cut off the retreating army, and with a number of his bravest horsemen has broken through the pagan line and is on the point of hurling his spear at Maxentius, whom a centurion, with the face of a lion on his helmet, is pointing out to him in the water. In the rear of Constantine the Christian standards are seen with crosses at the top, while in the air above, spirits of Victory are flying in a group. Between the standards and the bridge an obstinate struggle is going on, and the ground is strewn with dead and wounded warriors in pathetic attitudes.

Two or three different hands are visible in the drawing, which is generally good, but sometimes also very defective. The design is everywhere spirited and admirable, but the drawing does not equal it. The fore legs of Constantine's horse are unendurable; they would do small credit to a rocking-horse. Raphael composed a magnificent group of horses for the centre of this fresco, but it is also spoiled by this defect. The horse near Constantine, rearing back on his haunches, must have been the work of Giulio Romano, and though heavily outlined is much

more vigorous and lifelike.* Between these two there is another horse in a different style, and better than either of them.

Even where the action is fiercest the faces are rather tame. The attempt to give Constantine a calm, godlike expression, has not resulted favorably. Calmness is a mental condition unknown on the battle-field. Maxentius does not look nearly so serious as men do when they are in danger of drowning. A little of Leonardo's energy might have done good service here. The portraits of the two emperors may have been copied from coins, but Constantine resembles Marcus Aurelius, and we recollect that the statue of Aurelius was preserved during the fanatical period of Christianity, under the impression that it was a statue of Constantine.

Raphael's love of the purely beautiful is conspicuous everywhere. Some of the soldiers are equipped in Roman scale armor, but more of them wear tight-fitting suits of leather, which show their figures to better advantage. The helmets, shields, and weapons have all a Raphaelesque character. On the bank of the Tiber a shield is lying composed of successive plates in whorls, like the petals of a dahlia. In a half-seen boat near Maxentius there is a most interesting group, especially the young man looking downward across his right shoulder. The spirits in the sky were evidently painted by the same artist who spoiled the two angels support-

* This horse in form and attitude closely resembles one of those in Leonardo's *Battle of the Standard*.

ing the robes of Pope Urban. The attempt to give them a kind of radiance has resulted in a glistening effect. However, they are airy and graceful.

Meanwhile the two figures of *Justice* and *Religion* sit on either side in undisturbed tranquillity.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

Whether the last of Raphael's great works was painted wholly by himself, or was finished after his death by Giulio Romano, is of less importance than its metaphysical character. It is the lyric and the dramatic united in one, and it is the single instance in the history of art where this has been accomplished.

When we first approach the picture our attention is attracted by a large group of figures in many-colored costumes which recall at once Raphael's youthful *Sposalizio*. Before we can decipher the meaning of this design we notice the mild planetary radiance in the upper portion, with Christ and Moses and Elias hovering in it, as if it were their natural element. There everything is peace and harmony, while beneath there is discord and conflict. The picture has a twofold character; and we return again to the scene below for an explanation of this.

In the centre of the lower group is an epileptic boy; perfect in form and feature, but the machinery within is deranged. There is no sadder spectacle than this—the life of a human being spoiled in its very beginning. It is worse than death or even

blindness. His parents have come in the hope that he may be healed by Christ's miraculous power; but the Saviour is not to be found. His disciples express their sympathy for the case, and regret that they are themselves unable to render assistance. The disordered condition of the boy, the anxious solicitude of his parents, the eagerness of their friends, and the sympathetic regret of the disciples are all rendered with vital power. The dramatic effect is perfect.

Meanwhile the Saviour hovers in the sky, as if sorrow and trouble were dissolved forever in his radiance.

What is it that Raphael has accomplished here? There is no anachronism in the picture. The epileptic boy arrived while Christ was on the mount: such is the plain Bible story. It may have been a coincidence; but the two facts are in close relationship, and are deeply representative. They contain a problem and its solution. The problem is one which has vexed sages and moralists since thinking began. Why should evil exist for which there is no remedy? Good sometimes comes from evil, and sometimes evil from good; but there is unmitigated evil from which there is no escape on earth. What good, for instance, has resulted from the assassination of Garfield, or of Alexander II.? The one did not advance the cause of civil-service reform in America, nor the other that of constitutional government in Russia. What benefit will ever be derived from the Bulgarian massacres in 1877?

A solution is to be found in the *Transfiguration*. We may not be able to understand the wherefore of such evils, but there is that in us which can rise above them. Outwardly there is confusion and discord, but, within, man can produce that sense of harmony which leads us to associate a spiritual heaven with the clear sky above us. It would even seem that this internal unification was the true object of life. There is at least no stronger proof of man's divine origin and his immortal destiny than this vigorous self-assertion of his spiritual nature; and Raphael has symbolized it by the mild radiance which is suffused about the form of the Saviour.

As the noblest of singers once sang in Handel's *Messiah*, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," so that the whole audience felt a strong conviction of the fact, Raphael also painted Christ, not as a man, but as a spirit hovering in the air. It was the last and most nearly adequate image of the Saviour that Raphael created; and with the help of his popularity it has endured as a type to the present day. He would seem to have arrived at it as he attained his faculty of dramatic composition—by a long course of study and continued experiments. The face is not of a grand type, but humanly noble, tender, and elevated.

Neither are Moses and Elias inferior in their own degree. They belong with the group of apostles in the cartoon of the *Charge to Peter*. The drawing of their drapery shows that they float in the air by a volition that can accomplish whatever it desires. Only imagination trained in the service of truth)

could have done this. If it is not an inspired work, like the *Sistine Madonna*, it comes very close to being one. Raphael has given it all that genius, industry, and earnest contemplation could give; and it is as carefully painted as *St. Margaret and the Dragon*.

The lower portion is more studied, seems to have required more effort, and the drawing is not so pure as in Raphael's cartoons. The faces are bright and interesting, and some of the attitudes, especially of the woman kneeling in the foreground, are very fine, but there would seem to be rather too much elegance for such a company. A little of the strong realism of John the Baptist in the Foligno painting, close by, would not have been out of place here. It was well to give the epileptic boy a fine physique, for thus he appeals more strongly to our sympathy; but there is no reason why the grace of a St. Cecilia should have been wasted on him. The parti-colored effect of the draperies may have arisen from the necessity of bestowing all the *chiaroscuro* on the upper portion, where an effect of distance was required without the possibility of much perspective; so that only this device remained for separating the figures from one another; but it also corresponds with the idea of the perplexity occasioned by the disappearance of the Saviour.

"It has been provided for," said the German sage, "that trees shall not grow up to the sky." Raphael had done his work, and his time had come. If he accomplished so much in a short life, how much would he have produced in a long one? It

seems as if sooner or later the fertility of his invention must have become exhausted. How appropriate that the *Transfiguration* should have been his last work on earth. It is thus we now think of him : transfigured in the love and homage of posterity. There was an artistic perfection to his life, and we would not wish it to have been otherwise. He was not equal to the representation of tragedy, and it is admitted that to the last his compositions have a somewhat youthful character ; but he was a genius of the highest order. No other artist, or poet, has done equal justice to the sanctity of motherhood.

The *Transfiguration* is painted on a *tavola* composed of five pieces of wood between four and five inches thick. The *tavola* is apparently of white poplar.

POSTSCRIPT.

The portrait of Johanna of Aragon in the Louvre has always been classed as a Raphael, and often admired for its own sake independently of that ; but it does not bear decisive marks of Raphael's treatment. It is rather a brilliant portrait, but too literal for a work of genius. The expression of the face, especially of the eyes, is prosaic. Even if Johanna may have appeared like this, Raphael would not have painted her so. Few women would have been so dead to his personal magnetism. He would certainly have drawn out something from her akin to his own nature. I do not discover anywhere in her

drawing that delicate double curve which is so characteristic of Raphael. Neither is the position of the right arm, resting on the elbow with the hand raised toward the face and the fingers falling over, though unconstrained, such as Raphael would have been likely to adopt. It has the warm, ruddy coloring of Giovanni da Udine, and a comparison with Raphael's *Michael and Satan*, in the *grand salon*, makes it evident that both were painted by the same hand. Now Raphael's coloring after 1515 was cool and transparent.

The portrait in the Barberini palace which passes by the name of Raphael's *Fornarina* has great solidity and evidently belongs to the Roman school. It even possesses certain characteristics, such as the length of the nose, smallness of the mouth, and the contour of the shoulders, which suggest a relationship to the *Sistine Madonna*. It may be a portrait of the *Fornarina* of Italian artistic tradition; but this can never be proven, and the best argument for it is that she was evidently an uneducated person whose portrait had only been painted for some very exceptional reason. Her pose is similar to that of the *Venus dei Medici*, and was perhaps imitated from it. It is in bad taste, and we hesitate to assign such a design to Raphael. Morelli thinks that it was probably the work of Giulio Romano, and it reminds me of his painting of *The Lovers* in the Berlin Museum; and yet connoisseurs do not find in it the distinctive marks of Giulio's handling; and this shows what uncertainty prevails in such matters.



"THE TRANSFIGURATION," BY RAPHAEL

Vatican, Rome

RAPHAEL'S "HOURS."

Engravings called by this name have circulated freely during the present century, and much curiosity has been excited to know about the paintings or drawings from which they were taken. American travellers explored Rome, however, without succeeding in finding any trace of the originals. They were said to be in the Vatican, and a gentleman of my acquaintance, who is not often baffled by difficulties, searched the Vatican most thoroughly without being able to see or hear anything of them. A report was circulated that the *Hours* were not by Raphael at all, but engraved from some ancient mural paintings in Pompeii. At length an American lady, Miss Mary Williams of Salem, traced out the history of the engravings and the place where, as she supposed, the original paintings were;—for she was not permitted access to the rooms.

She found in the royal *stamperia* at Rome an old engraving of the decorations on the ceiling of a room in the Vatican, immediately under the Raphael Stanze, and in the central square of this ceiling were the well-known figures of Raphael's *Hours*. The apartment in which the *Hours* were said to have been painted was that formerly occupied by Alexander Borgia, and within the last few years it has been opened to the public, but the closest scrutiny has not succeeded in discovering them there; so that the original designs still remain as much of a mystery as ever. Miss Williams has given the result of her investigation to the world in a handsome and interesting volume.

Certain of the *Hours* were engraved separately at various times during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but the whole series was first given to the public during the reign of Napoleon by three Italian engravers of whom Fernando Mori is the only one known to fame. Reproductions of their work have been published by various French engravers.

There is a fine head in the museum at Buda Pesth, which both Morelli and Berensen have concluded to be a portrait of Raphael by Sebastian del Piombo. We would like to believe this, for it has the strength, as well as refinement, of expression which alone can account for Raphael's superiority; and yet the proportions of the face do not agree with the portrait of Raphael in his *School of Athens*, and they do agree closely with those of the *Violin Player* of the Sciarra Palace, feature for feature. The wood-cut of Raphael made by Bonasone in 1519 represents him with a short, thin beard.

CORREGGIO

WORKS of art may not only be divided into the ideal and realistic, the classic and romantic, but there is another division, the objective and subjective, which is independent of these. So far as an artist merely imitates the object before him, his work is objective ; so soon as he infuses in it his own spirit, or personality, it becomes to that degree subjective. It will thus be perceived that these terms are only relative ; for absolute objectivity can only exist through entire negation of style and character. It might be represented by the formula of a ship without sails on a motionless sea,—an idea most repulsive to the imagination. The nearest approach to it is found in the Dutch naval pictures and paintings of animal life. We admire Snyder's group of lions in the Pinacothek at Munich, for it is painted to perfection, but we pass by it quickly, attracted to more sympathetic subjects. It would seem as if it were to prove that this species of art could only rise above a certain level that Rubens and Rembrandt, who were developed out of it, are, of all great painters perhaps, the most strongly characteristic.

There is still another sub-division. A group of

lions could only be painted in an objective manner, but Rubens' *Lion Hunt*, though treated objectively, arouses our sympathy from the danger which threatens one of the hunters; and Giorgione's *Concert*, in itself a trivial matter to us, becomes highly interesting from the spirit with which the artist has imbued it. In art as in philosophy there is an objective-subjective, and a subjective-objective: that is, the design may be objective and the treatment subjective, as in Giorgione's *Concert*; or the reverse of this, as in Rubens' *Lion Hunt*. It is difficult to explain the difference between the subjective and objective *manner* in painting; it is more easily understood by the different ways in which two persons may relate the same story. One may tell it in a perfectly dispassionate manner and yet excite the interest and sympathy in his hearers by the fidelity of his description; and the other may accomplish this by the tones of his voice and the use of such phrases as appeal directly to them.

These two methods are well known in literature, and the former is considered the better kind of art and has always been practised by writers of the highest order; but the other is the more popular method, because it requires less of a mental effort to comprehend its meaning. Milton, Goldsmith, Emerson, and Browning have used the objective manner: Tennyson, Thackeray, Longfellow, and Whittier, the subjective. Scott, Wordsworth, and Byron have sometimes used one method and sometimes the other. In music Bach and Handel are the most strongly objective; Schumann and Chopin are the

most subjective composers. From these instances we perceive the tendency of the present age.

The spirituality of Tuscan art could only be expressed subjectively, but the manner of Leonardo and Michel Angelo was always objective. They cast their great creations from them to live or die on their own merits. Raphael, however, inclined to the subjective manner of treatment, and this may be observed more particularly in the *School of Athens*, his *Parnassus*, the *Fire in the Borgo*, and the *Madonna della Sedia*. His peculiar grace is itself a subjective quality. But ten years after Raphael, a genius was born in the plains of Lombardy who carried subjectivity in art to such a length as few have attempted since, and no others have succeeded in.

We never visit the birthplaces of famous men; we go to Stratford-on-Avon not because Shakspeare was born there but because he lies buried there; and yet the influence which immediate surroundings may have on a susceptible nature, as in Raphael's case, has heretofore been noticed, and his great rival also attributed the energy in his own temperament to the mountain air in which he was reared.* Certain it is that no artist of the grand manner has ever appeared between Venetia and the Apennines. Least of all would such be expected from the little city of Correggio, which Antonio Allegri has made famous

* An American lady, who lived much in Italy, had one daughter born to her in Rome and another in Florence. Both were of a romantic disposition; but the first was possessed of a dreamy melancholy, such as is often induced by the contemplation of a ruin, while her sister was quick-witted and lively. Can this have been wholly accidental?

for us,—situated, as it is, amid sluggish watercourses, with the mountains like a blue rim on the southwestern horizon.

Neither could young Antonio's mind be stimulated much by political events; for the little duchy of Modena lay outside of the arena of Italian politics; and peace and tranquillity reigned there, as in the duchy of Weimar during the wars between Germany and France. Under such conditions an ardent nature like Antonio's had no other resource but to turn upon itself, to live in the affections and fine emotions, and as a change from that to gaze into the deep luminous ether of the Italian sky. He therefore drew his inspiration from these two sources, and being gifted with the very finest genius, he made them the twofold subject of his splendid art.

A shy, sensitive, and tender-hearted youth we may imagine him; one whose safety consisted in a retired mode of life, and whose inclinations also favored this. The portrait which he has left us of himself, and which was painted toward the close of his life, for he died at nearly the same age as Byron, is rather disappointing. The face is not a strong one, though the aquiline line of his nose gives it a certain character; and we see too little of his eyes, which must have been his finest feature. People who live in the affections, without too much pressure from the outside world so that they can be at peace with themselves, have an expression in their eyes which reminds me of Dr. Channing's saying, that heaven is in our own hearts. Correggio's face is refined, and the expression dreamy.

His art was the natural offspring of Leonardo's, but it passed through a complete modification in Correggio's hands. His faces are always smiling; but it is not the smile of Leonardo, so full of character and intelligence, but rather the sympathetic smile of a tender-hearted girl who is happy herself, and cannot understand why others should not be so. He has also adopted the narrow jowl and square chin of the Lombardy school, for which Leonardo himself should not be held responsible; but the dignified reserve of Leonardo, which was part of his strength and which he finally carried to the enigmatic degree, Correggio replaced by an open, child-like frankness which knows no evil and fears no danger. This is, indeed, the most characteristic quality in his designs, and attests the purity of his own nature. Raphael also lived much in the affections, and represented in the most perfect manner the relation between a mother and her child; but Raphael's mothers were always wise and self-contained, whereas Correggio's Madonnas are almost as ingenuous as his children.

He seized instinctively on Leonardo's theories of light and shade and aërial perspective, and developed them to a degree beyond anything their author anticipated. *Chiaroscuro* was Correggio's great contribution to art. He was the first painter to give his pictures an atmosphere. Titian and Andrea del Sarto had already effected something in that way, but not to the extent of Correggio. He brought down the summer skies of Italy onto his canvas, and caused the air to circulate about his figures and

whisper in their ears. His light and shade is not more remarkable for delicacy than boldness. His transparent shadows lie one over another and serve to reveal instead of hiding the objects on which they rest. His reflections rival his shadows; and both serve to bring out the subject of his picture with more truthfulness than the most correct outlines. It is a web woven of cloud and sunshine.

If with Raphael the ideal sometimes overbalanced the real, Correggio may be said to have been carried fairly off his feet by it. He lived in a world of his own creating, peopled with beings like himself; where all was love, innocence, and purity. His saints float upon clouds, in which cherubs play hide-and-seek. Such creations would not stand the test of practical life, and yet we contemplate them with profound respect.

His coloring corresponds to this. It is not the coloring of real life, but of an imaginary existence. His tints are not those of earth, but of the sky; and when Tintoretto painted *San Rocco in Heaven*, he adopted Correggio's coloring as the most suitable for his subject. Many of his paintings resemble sunsets; some with a warm central glow of light, and others gorgeous with bright prismatic hues. Yet they are never too highly colored for a refined taste, and though we may become tired of their refulgence as we do of long-continued sunshine, we enjoy seeing them again after a brief interval. Correggio's reflections of light are the most interesting part of his coloring to a connoisseur, and give all his pictures a technical value quite distinct from the



"READING MAGDALEN," BY CORREGGIO

Dresden Museum

quality of their design. His *Io* in the Berlin museum shows that he could give color even to darkness and make it pleasant and attractive.

He was not one of the greatest masters of the pencil, but his drawing is good; I should say fully equal to Titian's. His lines are pure, simple, and graceful, and he understood how to give ideality to form. The arms of his *Diana* vie with those of Tintoretto's *Ariadne*, and yet in shape they are quite different. The arms of the *Diana* are the more finely modelled of the two. The nude figures of his saints likewise have a style peculiarly their own: rounded shoulders, with a round, compact body, and limbs not too muscular—an admirable style. There is a lack of variety among them, but that is atoned for by the attitudes, of which Correggio always had a store at his command. When his drawing does not appear to advantage the fault is always with the attitude and not from incorrect outlines. Some of his postures are eccentric enough. In his children, and especially in the youthful genii at Palma, he shows a fine imagination for form nearly equal to Raphael at his best, and quite surpassing the infant Saviours of Raphael's early period.

Dresden is the place to study the earlier as well as the latest work of Correggio, so far as either is now accessible to the public. Of his amateur productions nothing is known to be still existent, but there is an altar-piece at Dresden, executed in his twenty-first year for the monastery of the Minorites in his native town, which surpasses in breadth of design

and especially in technical skill any work produced at the same age by either Raphael or Giorgione. It contains all the elements of his future greatness, and, if these are not so happily disposed as in later works, they are sufficiently prominent to impress us with surprise and admiration.

The Madonna sits on an elevated throne, between the columns of an Ionic porch, with a fine light in the sky beyond, in which appears a sort of irregular halo formed by the heads of cherubs. Two cherubs, with bodies, float within the porch on a level with the capitals; one drawn lengthwise and the other at a right angle,—both successfully rendered. Her throne is an elaborate structure, supported by two carved cherubs, in which Correggio already shows his love for that elegant decoration in which he has never been equalled. It is indeed too elegant, too highly decorated, for the simplicity of the mother of Jesus. It even reminds one slightly of an expensive French clock. Four saints stand in adoration about this structure, among whom a full-grown John the Baptist is the most dignified and impressive. The attitudes of the others, though fairly well conceived, have rather too much sentimentality. St. Francis opposite to the Baptist bends his knee to the infant Saviour, an action which the Madonna gracefully recognizes by her outstretched hand, and an inclination of her head full of sweetness and humility. The attitude of the Saviour is admirable; his whole figure seems to palpitate with vitality. The painting has not the marvellous *chiaroscuro* of Correggio's later style; but the lights

and shadows are well disposed, and the figures wrought into a deeper relief than in any of Raphael's Florentine works. Where Correggio learned all this it is impossible to say.

A Madonna in the Uffizi, ascribed to Titian, No. 1002, is now considered to have belonged to Correggio's earlier period, and there are others in the museums of Ferrara and Milan, besides the delightful Zingarella * at Naples.

THE READING MAGDALEN.

For similar reasons I believe that his *Magdalen* in the Dresden gallery must have been the first of his more celebrated paintings. Though it is of diminutive size it ranks third in honor in a museum which contains so many masterpieces by Italian, German, and Dutch painters. It is impossible to find fault with it. Whether we consider the natural grace of her attitude, the simplicity of her attire, the deep tone of the background against which her figure is relieved, the radiant glow of her arms and breast, or the delicate shading of her gentle face, it is not easy to imagine a better painting. There are few perfect things in this world, but Correggio's *Magdalen* is one of them.

The bright blue color of her mantle has been objected to, but without this it would not be characteristic of Correggio. It has been previously noticed that he lived in the sky rather than on the earth;

* Sometimes called the *Madonna of the Rabbit*—an animal quite characteristic of Correggio.

and the fact is represented here in this manner. His pictures are always bright and cheerful. The frame of a picture must be adapted to the subject, and Mary's horizontal position required a low background, so that little or no sky is visible in it. Girolamo Battoni, who painted a reading Magdalen in a similar attitude in the eighteenth century, was obliged to adopt a similar expedient.

A doubt has been expressed as to the religious character of Correggio's *Magdalen*; and it has been questioned whether it represents more than a young woman in negligent costume reading in a sylvan retreat. Public opinion has decided otherwise; and I think the sense of penitence is sufficiently expressed by the shadow on her face and the ruggedness of the scenery; for she appears to be reclining on stony ground. It is such contrition as Correggio himself might have felt from his sensitive conscience, in a life comparatively pure and blameless.

He is credited with having been the first to introduce the modern method of painting hair by a kind of shorthand; by which much labor is saved and a soft and natural appearance attained without drawing too many fine lines. The hair of the *Reading Magdalen* is an excellent example of this treatment.*

There is a noble head of St. John the Evangelist attributed to Correggio, and formerly owned by Mr. Jarves, the American Consul at Florence, which resembles the *Reading Magdalen* in its vigorous and healthful tone; as it does also in the lack of his later *chiaroscuro*. The face is turned upward with an ad-

* See Appendix for discussion of the authenticity of this picture.



MARRIAGE OF S. CATHERINE, BY CORREGGIO

Louvre Gallery, Paris

mirable expression of religious fervor, and the panel is so nearly covered by it as to give the impression of heroic size.

THE ECCE HOMO.

One of the best examples of Correggio's coloring, and as bright and fresh as if it were painted twenty years ago, is his *Ecce Homo* in the National gallery. The half-length figure of Christ nearly fills up the canvas, and yet the Madonna, one of the Marys, Pontius Pilate, and a Roman centurion are also introduced. Though we only see a small portion of these last, the arrangement is so skilful that the whole group seems to stand bodily before us. The imagination easily supplies what Correggio has left out, or had no space for. Its wonderful *chiaroscuro* easily distinguishes it from all other paintings in the room; yet the picture has faults of composition which go far to neutralize its chromatic splendor.

If Raphael was not able to face tragedy, what can we expect of the tender and fragile Correggio? It would seem as if painters feel much more than poets the sufferings of those whose images they reproduce. The aspect of endurance on the faces of the great tragic artists is convincing evidence of this. Correggio's Saviour has an expression of suffering, as if from the toothache, but there is no moral power behind it,—no look of determination. As there is a lack of manliness in his face so there is in his hands, which are decidedly those of a woman. In fact, there is a very slight difference between his hands and those of his mother.

The expression of the Madonna and of her friend is much more serious, though the two would seem to have been painted from the same model. Pontius Pilate is the best head in the group; a refulgent piece of coloring, into which Correggio evidently put his whole heart. His face is Greek, and rather delicate for that, but still very handsome. The hardened centurion on the other side is a pleasant relief in so much physical tenderness.

Persons who have become acquainted with Correggio through Toschi's engravings are often disappointed at the first sight of his *Ecce Homo*. There is always more severity in a steel engraving than in a painting (as there is also in sculpture), and with Correggio this is sometimes an advantage. Toschi gives to the frescos at Parma a more religious and ethereal tone than really belongs to them. Correggio himself is always sensuous.

The *Ecce Homo* in London leads directly to a peculiar mental characteristic of Correggio, which might be called an attempt to represent the impossible in human nature,—apparently with perfect faith in its reality. The earlier Italian painters depicted the martyrdom of saints, sometimes in agony and sometimes in bliss, but the latter does not offend our senses because their art was so far removed from nature that their work appeals to us chiefly as an intellectual abstraction. Correggio, however, in his *Martyrdom of St. Placidus and St. Flavia at Parma* has brought to bear the full force of his sensuous verisimilitude of actual life to portray two human beings with smiling countenances in the

very act of execution. The impossibility of this detracts at once from our admiration for the picture. St. Flavia is looking to heaven with the happiest of faces while the sword of the assassin is plunged into her heart; St. Placidus has already received one cut on his neck and turns his head aside to afford the executioner a fair opportunity, evidently in the most tranquil mental condition. An angel drawn with Correggio's peculiar grace hovers above holding a lily in one hand and an aureole in the other. Here the ideal is wholly disconnected from the real, the palpable touches the impalpable, and we find ourselves separated from the standpoint of the painter by a gulf which no admiration for technical skill will enable us to cross. There is the same tendency in Correggio's *Christ* in the National gallery, but it is not carried there to its logical, or illogical, conclusion.

The *Marriage of St. Catherine*, in the Louvre, was a subject more in harmony with Correggio's temperament, and his genius certainly shines forth in it with splendid effect. Its drawing has not the dignity of Raphael, but it is easy and graceful, and the faces are quite as much idealized. At the same time they are delightfully human. St. Catherine is charming rather than beautiful, but she is attractive, as some of Domenichino's heads are attractive. Especially do we feel that Correggio enjoyed every moment that he spent in painting it. One reason for this may have been because, as is said, it was painted as a wedding gift to his own sister Caterina.

PARMA.

No man can escape from the popular tendency of his time. Even if he exert himself to oppose it, the effort of resistance has an effect upon him, and warps his life. It will be noticed that the period of Correggio's activity very nearly coincides with what we have called the false renaissance,—when the admiration for Greek and Roman antiquity threatened to turn the course of modern civilization out of its proper channel. It was fortunate for Raphael and Titian that they were trained to their calling before this period began, and for Paul and Tintoretto that they came after it had ended. The gentle Correggio had no idea of resisting its influence, but he allowed the classic revival to percolate through him, like water through a filter, leaving its impurities mostly behind. He was invited to Parma almost at the same time that Raphael was painting the *Triumph of Galatea*, a work of similar character to the frescos of Correggio in the convent of San Paolo.

Diana as the patron saint of a nunnery was a novelty, but not inappropriate. She was the goddess of celibacy to the Greeks, and why not allegorically to Christians also? What subject could serve better to remind the inmates of their irrevocable vows? Neither are the frolicsome boys in the lunettes less in keeping with the sanctity of the place. A happy innocent child is the very type of purity. They must have served as an alleviation and a cheerful relaxation to the lives of those unfortunate women immured within the convent of San Paolo;



"LEDA AND THE SWAN," BY CORREGGIO

Berlin Gallery

but it was a luxury which could only have been permitted at this particular era, and the wonder is that it was permitted at all.

Neither can I agree with the German critic who considers Correggio immeasurably inferior to Raphael in intensity of expression. He does not equal Raphael in depth of feeling, but in vividness of expression there is no painting that surpasses Correggio's *Diana*, and few of Raphael's that equal it. Her face gives forth moonlight; and as a study of light it is only rivalled by his other masterpiece which Italians call the *Day*. The background is formed of a cloudy sky so as to give an appearance like that of the moon breaking through the clouds. There is nowhere a more poetic or perfect painting.

In the midst of this splendor we discover a friendly, human intelligence. She seems on the point of recognizing the spectator, and yet does this without looking out of the picture. Her frankness is charming; her sympathy captivating; her beauty inexpressible. She is at once purely Greek and perfectly Christian; Hellenic in her *naïve* simplicity, and modern in her intellectual consciousness. Her exquisite form is modestly revealed by the pliant folds of her light drapery. Grandeur and more elevated types of womanhood have been conceived, but none more perfect than this. She represents not only the romance of moonlight but its friendliness. She is the very spirit of chastity.

This is the most objective in treatment of Correggio's paintings, except the *Magdalen*; and I think that is the reason why they excel the rest. They

possess a firmness of character which is too frequently lacking in his work.

Correggio, like Raphael, gave a peculiar elegance to all inanimate objects. This is noticeable in the car which carries Diana and which is fully worthy of its occupant; and also in the lattice-work which surrounds the lunettes,—a trellis intertwined with roses and morning-glories, a refined and classic selection. Morning-glories especially seem appropriate to Correggio; the flowers born of morning radiance, glowing with the freshness of opening day, their delicate petals trembling with the slightest breath of air, and touched with an aërial grace.

The frolicsome boys in the lunettes are very charming. They are neither cupids, nor cherubs, nor genii, but ideal children of heaven; an invention of Correggio's own, on which no other artist has infringed. They belong to a sensuous heaven it is true, but their purity is not of this world. Each of them has a distinct individuality. Now one is rushing through the network of vines, as if no time could be lost till the coveted aim was reached; now one pauses to caress a dog whose clear, intelligent eyes reveal his share in the festivity. Another is carrying a stone on his head of such size that supernatural strength would seem to be required for the exertion. The dreamy Raphael could not have represented such blithesome activity. The convent of San Paolo is one of the sanctuaries of art.

We do not behold the frescos in the church of S.

Giovanni at Parma with equal satisfaction. Correggio's well-known trick of foreshortening, a realistic device altogether discordant with his ideal temperament, injures the effect of his painting there more, taken as a whole, than when we divide it into separate groups. It indicates perhaps that his idea of heaven was not an elevated one, but easily visible from the surface of the earth.

It is a mistake to suppose that Correggio was not religious. He had not the sublimated faith of Fra Angelico, but one of his own, which was none the less sincere. It resembled the English Episcopal belief of the present time, which instructs us that we can enjoy life on this earth without necessarily disobeying the precepts of Jesus,—as in the *Diana* he has united the intelligent naturalism of the Greek with the supernaturalism of the Christian. It is not the faith of Christ's disciples who went forth to conquer a world immersed in sensuality and superstition; nor the faith of the Scotch Covenanters; but, such as we know it, it was sincere. It was not a strong faith which could resist external pressure, but rather the religion of domestic life, which feels the need of a divine providence for its happy continuation.

The frescos in S. Giovanni are so much dimmed by time that they ought to be taken in connection with Toschi's engravings; and yet Correggio's *chiaroscuro* is so remarkable that we seem to be looking into the wall instead of on it, as we look into water, and discover his graceful figures floating there in an element of their own. The central com-

position of the Saviour in glory is not so interesting as the smaller groups below, of the four evangelists and the apostles discoursing on the clouds, because these suffer less from Correggio's peculiar foreshortening.

Chief among them is the picture of John, the patron saint of the church, seated under a low Roman arch with his eagle (or rather a vulture) with drooping wings, perched at his feet. He has not the heroic energy of Fra Angelico's *Evangelist* or the grand realism of Dürer's, but his refined spirituality is beyond question. I do not know another face which unites so much individuality with a perfect ideal; and if Correggio has anywhere escaped from a sensuous expression, it is here. St. John's face is intellectual and of the highest order. The right foot is exaggerated, just as it would be in a photograph, and this is the only imperfection that mars the grace and purity of Correggio's drawing.

Among the apostles on the clouds, St. Paul and the apostle with him make the finest group; though St. Peter gesticulating with his keys is also a noble figure. St. Paul looks upward slightly, as if to appeal for confirmation to the heavenly host above, and his arm is raised in the gesture of an orator, while his companion is contrasted with him by darker hair and beard, and a head inclined meditatively. The two are representative of a preacher and his audience, and both the face and attitude of St. Paul are as eloquent as words could be. St. Thomas the doubter may have been chosen as St.

Paul's companion, for his skeptical temperament; and the contrast between his dark physique and Paul's lighter complexion not only has its artistic value but serves to explain the motive of the picture.

The wealth of Correggio's imagination is exemplified in the group of St. Thomas attended by five maidenly youths of rare beauty, who cling to him as he ascends on curling wreaths of vapor. The only costume of this saint appears to be a mantle and a pair of soft leather boots, one of which is too much in focus; and his face is more sensuous than that of St. Paul, but its expression is elevated. His delicately arched eyebrows are the type of all his features, as well as of the treatment of his hair. The exquisitely varied forms and faces of the youths who accompany him surpass even the boys in the lunettes of San Paolo. They have the purity of fresh marble statues, and yet their radiant limbs seem to have been moulded by summer breezes. If Correggio has anywhere approached true grandeur, it is in the church of St. John the Evangelist. His *St. Thomas* has something of the majesty of the *Zeus* of Otricoli.

The *Madonna della Scala*, in the museum at Parma, belongs to the noontide of Correggio's work. It requires some minutes for the eye to become accustomed to its present condition, and to discover the beauty that is concealed beneath its surface; but it holds a place between the *Madonna della Sedia* and the masterpiece at Dresden. The ineffable tenderness of maternal affection is depicted with equal affection and solicitude.

The Madonna herself was evidently painted from the same model as the *Reading Magdalen*, only some years later.

The ultimate goal of subjectivity is love; which may be called the sentiment of self in an ideal condition. Love may be selfish and coarse or noble and elevated, according to the character of the individual. No painter, except Michel Angelo, has ventured so far in this direction as Correggio; though Goethe, Shakspeare, and other poets have been equally daring. It is less difficult to judge of Correggio's motives in this instance, because such a long series of works (as well as the evidence of Vasari) tend to prove the purity of his nature; yet it was dangerous ground to tread on, and may possibly have led to a decline in the quality of his art.

The best copy of *Io* is in the Albertina; for the one in Berlin was injured by the French nobleman, its previous owner, who cut the canvas in pieces. It resembles Leonardo's *St. John* in treatment, but is even more of a nocturne. Its effect on a serious mind is chastening; but only the pure in heart can appreciate such a picture. In fact it requires single-mindedness to understand any superior work of art. It is much in *Io's* favor that she is greatly admired by her own sex. A great many photographs of her are sold to ladies; very few to men. She is beautiful and painted with incomparable delicacy.

Michel Angelo painted his *Leda* from an interest in human nature, but Correggio from a love of girlish beauty. This at least is the effect he has produced. He may have taken the scene from Homer's pretty episode in the *Odyssey*. The king's



MADONNA DELLA SCALA, BY CORREGGIO
Museum, Parma

daughter and her maidens are bathing in a secluded part of the river, when they are frightened from the water by the approach of swans. Leda alone is not afraid of them, and waits to receive them. The demure expression of the maid-servant, who is helping to attire one of the girls, shows what Correggio might have accomplished as a dramatic painter.

As these two pictures hang close together in the Berlin gallery, we may easily notice a decided difference of treatment between them. In coloring and manner the *Leda* most nearly resembles the *Reading Magdalen*, and probably was painted at about the same time.

If Correggio like Alcibiades profaned the Eleusinian mysteries in the *Antiope* of the Louvre, yet, technically considered, this is the most magnificent of his works. It is the perfection of gorgeous coloring, and yet does not exceed the limits of a refined taste. No one could represent the color of flesh better than Titian, but Correggio surpasses him in softness and the play of light. In the *Antiope* we have the two united. Her resplendent figure gleams from afar. She has also the advantage of Titian's Venuses in ideality of form. Her realistic attitude may prevent this from being readily noticed, but her throat and shoulders, which were evidently painted rather than drawn, are as finely modelled as in the *Meleager* of the Vatican. Even in the *Sleeping Venus* of Dresden, a conventional arrangement of the hair detracts largely from the romance of the subject; but the long flowing hair of the *Antiope* has a ripple in it of burnished gold, a glorious head of

hair. Her hands closely resemble those of the *Reading Magdalen*, which would seem to be a link between this painting and the *Leda*, though much nearer to the latter. The background taken by itself would make a landscape of the highest order. The sunlight flashes between the trees and the rich clusters of leaves, as it will in a grove on a July afternoon.

The *Danaë* in the Borghese gallery is an equally voluptuous subject, and cannot be praised to the same extent as the *Antiope*. Her attitude, though graceful, is too realistic; which of itself is plain proof that Correggio has here transcended the proper limits of his art. Neither has the coloring of the *Danaë* an equal depth and decisiveness of tone. In painting the *Antiope*, Correggio seemed to have possessed a certainty of judgment which gave that work its easy superiority. There is a partial compensation, however, in the two little cupids sharpening their arrows, which some poor copyist is always at work upon. Correggio has exactly caught the expression of a young child when he is intent on some small affair which seems to him of vital importance.

IL GIORNO AND LA NOTTE.

The *Day* and *Night* of Correggio at Dresden are treated as companion pieces though they are painted in a wholly different manner and many years must have elapsed between their production. *Il Giorno* is closely allied to the *Ecce Homo* of the National gallery, while *La Notte*, though remarkable for its

brilliant effects of light, belongs to the period of Correggio's decline. The former is in fact one of his finest easel-paintings, and unites noble spirituality with a representation of the tenderest domestic affection. It is the very essence of love; and this is portrayed without any admixture of sentimentalism. The face of the Madonna is beautiful, calm, and dignified; the infant Jesus, who is precociously reading in a book held by an admiring angel, is animated to his toes and finger-tips; an almost naked St. Jerome looks down upon him with joyous gravity; while a beautiful and captivating anachronistic Magdalen leans against the Madonna and nestles her head close to the baby Saviour. A small Baptist, who appears to be examining a crystal glass, skilfully balances the group. The picture has been called *Day* from its refulgent light, which seems to fill the canvas and gives the Madonna and her child an almost supernatural radiance. The beauty of the Magdalen is thrown into relief by placing her in half shadow; and a sunny Italian landscape fills the background. The coloring though bright is not too brilliant, and the harmonious distribution of the various tints is a study of itself. St. Jerome's lion is, however, a failure and would seem to have been studied from an old Roman grotesque. The Virgin resembles the *Madonna della Scala*, and the Magdalen is one of Correggio's most original and characteristic figures.

The wonderful atmosphere of Correggio's *Notte*, which is really a Nativity, should not blind us to the inequalities of its design. The expression of the

Madonna bending over her radiant child has an ineffable tenderness, which is reflected sympathetically in the faces of the attendant angels; but the angels hovering above suffer from Correggio's peculiar habit of foreshortening the proportions of their bodies for the benefit of the extremities, and the postures of the spectators present are so contorted in the drawing as to suggest the presence of a slight mental malady. The sturdy herdsman, or Baptist, is so overpowered by the light that he has turned his head sharply to one side, so that only the points of an eyebrow, nose, and chin are visible. An angel hovering above seems to be afflicted with an ærial cramp. The manner in which the fingers of the maid who is looking up to him are twisted is barely capable of a rational explanation. Correggio may have intended to express in this manner the ecstasy with which they behold the infant Jesus, but we have only to pass into the adjoining room and look at the *Sistine Madonna* to recognize that ecstasy is not inconsistent with self-possession.

A third altar-piece in this richly stored gallery, painted 1525, is a *Coronation of the Virgin*, who appears on a throne in the sky surrounded by a glory of angels, and on the earth beneath St. Sebastian and others stand with "looks of longing upward gazing." In design it lies midway between *Il Giorno* and *La Notte*, which latter was painted five years afterward.*

A more self-contained and classic example of the Madonna and her new-born child by Correggio is in

* Woltmann and Woermann, *History of Painting*, ii., 591.

the Uffizi at Florence, and is more domestic as well as more poetic for being without attendant saints.

Strong men are always objective. Long-continued subjectivity is weakening; and the greater number of subjective poets and painters, like Byron, Heine, Schiller, Giorgione, and Raphael, have met with an early death. The mind and nerves require external resistance for their sanitary condition quite as much as the muscles. Raphael's broad, practical activity might perhaps have saved him; but Correggio had neither the physique nor the ability for that. There are several pictures of his which plainly indicate an unfavorable change in his mental condition, and they may be considered a prediction of his untimely end.

The picture called Correggio's *St. George*, at Dresden, indicates a further moral decline. The background, with its pleasant open archway and floral decoration, recalls the frescos of San Paolo, but the Madonna and her saints would seem to be in a most unhealthy condition of nervous excitability. The head of St. Peter Martyr is bent over in certainly an extravagant, if not an affected, position; St. George, otherwise a fine figure, is looking out with a self-conscious air; the youthful Baptist is pointing towards the infant Saviour with gleeful exultation; and the whole group seem to be dangerously near a spasmodic ebullition. The effect is so disagreeable that no skill of the brush can compensate for it.

There can be no doubt that Correggio died of a

fever; but the story that it resulted from his carrying home a heavy payment in copper is not generally believed. If he suffered from poverty it was his own fault,—if weakness in such a man is to be considered a fault.

None of these celestial artists however were paid one hundredth part of the value of their work. From Apelles to Leonardo was two thousand years; and the earth may go round the sun as many times before it will see their like again.



TWO CUPIDS
(DETAIL FROM CORREGGIO'S DANAË)
Borghese Gallery

APPENDIX.

MORELLI *RESARTUS*.

"Italian Masters in German Galleries."

GIOVANNI MORELLI first appeared under the Russian name of Ivan Sermoleff, and proved his Russian proclivity in a fair degree by the realistic manner in which he criticised notable paintings of the ideal period of Italian art. He still remains sufficiently Italian, however, to appreciate their beauty, although he may have been unaware whence that beauty was derived. He admires the Sistine Madonna calmly and considerately, which is good evidence that its superiority has made a just impression on him. He is also susceptible to the internal light of Giorgione, without, however, recognizing the spiritual element which it represents.

He is rather a brilliant writer, and the conversations which he reports as taking place in the picture-galleries (worked up no doubt from actual occurrences), indicate a dramatic talent little inferior to that of Count Tolstoi. The object of his work, however, is to decide the authenticity of old paintings, and in discussing this theme he displays an amount of erudition and a thorough study of his subject which is fairly surprising. Neither does he

place it before the readers in a pedantic manner, but in the form of a lively and interesting narrative. His book is entertaining and yet has a serious character.

No amount of erudition will give a man accurate judgment; that is a matter of logic, a mental method, and can only be attained by long experience and constant self-criticism. Morelli depends too much, in his judgment of pictures, on subordinate peculiarities. There is no single test for the authenticity of old paintings. The drawing, the coloring, the expression of the face, the *chiaroscuro*, the handling (which is the artist's chirography), the background, and what are called accessories, all have to be taken into consideration. Morelli pays slight attention to either expression or *chiaroscuro*, and places especial emphasis on the shape of the hands and of the ear.

Now the hands have always been a favorite criterion with connoisseurs, because they are just the point with which a great painter will take pains, and which the copyist will be likely to neglect. It is not their shape, however, so much as their style and handling, that has hitherto been considered. With the Pre-Raphaelites who painted everything except the face in a mechanical manner, the shape of the hands is indeed important, and to a certain extent also, among later artists; but good painters since Michel Angelo have, with few exceptions, drawn their hands to suit the style of their figures; for in a symmetrical person,—and no other should be introduced into imaginative art,—the hand will always bear a resemblance to the individual. Thus a thick-set man will have stout hands with short fingers, and a tall, graceful woman will have long slender fingers. Much the same may be said of the ears; but in a majority of pictures the ears are not visible at all, and if they are visi-

ble, they are often so much foreshortened that nothing can be determined by them.

It will not be difficult to prove by a few illustrious examples, that Morelli's judgment is by no means infallible.

There is a portrait in the Pitti Palace Gallery called the *Donna Velata* about which critics have long been in doubt. Morelli, judging in his usual manner, is satisfied that it was painted by Raphael, and thinks that he has found in it the original from which the *Sistine Madonna* was derived. This, however, could only happen by an extent of idealization which every realist would at once repudiate. The face of the *Sistine Madonna* is a long oval, with unusually large, tender eyes. The face of the *Donna Velata* is not an oval at all, but, as one might say, neither too long nor too broad, with regular but rather crisp features, and an expression as of a pleasant woman who has a good deal of snap in her. It would have been quite as possible to have used James Russell Lowell as a model for a portrait of Washington. He says of the *Sistine Madonna*, vol. ii., p. 211 :

"The space seems to me much too narrow, and it is my conviction that if it were hung higher, for instance in one of the large saloons, this dreamy, heavenly vision would make a more perfect impression on the spectator. Here, unfortunately, one sees too much of the damage the painting has received, chiefly from restoration. These injuries are especially obvious in the infant Christ, and on the forehead of the Madonna. But marred and mottled as it is, it nevertheless produces an indescribable, a magic effect."

I have gazed at the *Sistine Madonna* day after day until I discovered that her eyes were painted in such a manner that in cloudy weather they are scarcely visible.

This it is which gives such depth of expression to her face. I never discovered that the picture had been retouched anywhere, but it may have been, for I was not looking for blemishes ; to say, however, that the *Sistine Madonna* has a marred and mottled appearance, is profoundly absurd, and would give anyone who had never seen it an erroneous impression. It is one of the best preserved pictures of the sixteenth century, and so delicately painted that it seems as if nowhere one stroke of the brush overlaid another. Grimm affirms that it is the only one of Raphael's greater works that is worthily located, and I think nine persons out of ten will agree that it were well if every such masterpiece could have a room, or at least a wall, by itself. Certainly to remove the *Sistine Madonna* to the outer hall, where it might be placed between a *Venus* and a *Leda*, would be no less than sacrilege. It would not only be an injury to the paintings about it, but they would also have an unfavorable effect upon the *Madonna*.

Morelli's most startling discovery is that the *Reading Magdalen* which has always been attributed to Correggio, must necessarily have been painted by Adrian Van der Werff. He gives his argument for this in the form of a colloquy with a German lady on page 132, vol. ii.

"I am sorry to say I am in sober earnest. Have the goodness to examine the picture more narrowly. Look at the dazzling ultramarine of the mantle. Why, that is the Van der Werff color all over ; see the affected form of the fingers, the long nails, with all that light thrown on the cut edges, a thing no Italian ever did ; then observe all those little stones in the foreground, how minutely they are executed, exactly as in the picture No. 1643, by Van der Werff ; so with the cold miniature-like glossy vessel of ointment by the side of the *Magdalen* ; will you

also compare the foliage here with the foliage in Van der Werff's pictures (Nos. 1640 and 1641), and lastly, the cracks in this painting with the cracks in the paintings of Van der Werff and his contemporaries."

I am pleased to learn that Raphael Mengs considered this the finest of Correggio's works, for I have long held the same opinion. The best proof of its authenticity lies in the feminine tenderness of the woman's expression. Correggio was the most subjective of all painters and that may be the reason why he succeeded in painting the best picture of a Magdalen, for penitence is the most profoundly subjective of all emotions. It is the recoil of human weakness upon itself. Van der Werff may not have been the most phlegmatic of the Flemings, but even Rubens would be considered phlegmatic compared with Correggio.

Next observe the softness and texture of her flesh,—the arms and breast,—Titian and Raphael could not have equalled it. Titian might render the color of flesh better, but not the texture. The hair also is characteristic of Correggio; a succession of soft waves with a slight ripple in them, broadly handled. Even the shape of the hands give in their evidence; for we have already noticed that Correggio was exceptional among the very great painters in not adapting the form of his hands to the character of his figures. The left hand of the Magdalen, which is the only one that can be seen plainly, has the same delicate, rather attenuated, fingers and long nails, as the hands of the Saviour in the *Ecce Homo* at London. The edges of the nails are conspicuous because the light strikes directly on them.

Another more decided mark of authenticity is the contour of her face. Correggio's faces have rather pointed chins and a narrow jowl. His Magdalen is not an ex-

treme case of this, and the peculiarity is partly concealed by the shadow of her arm, but her face is certainly not an oval. Neither do I find the blue of her mantle glaring. It is in keeping with Correggio's general tone of color, which belongs to heaven rather than to earth. The stones in the foreground are essential to give the effect of loneliness, on a canvas too small for trees. It is not quite true that, as Morelli says, stones are never to be met with in the foregrounds of Italian paintings; for there are stones in the foreground of Tintoretto's *Golden Calf* and in a number of others. As for the cracks in the varnish, those may well be left to the curious.

Morelli attempts to prove too much when he describes the *Reading Magdalen* as a cold picture. The universal opinion of mankind, and especially of womankind, has decided differently. It is safe to assert, that no coldly painted picture could arouse the genuine enthusiasm that this *Magdalen* has.

It seems more likely that Morelli is correct in regard to the *Sleeping Venus* at Dresden, which has hitherto been ascribed to Titian. It is too good a painting to be a copy, and yet its coloring does not resemble that of Titian's Venuses in the Uffizi. The close proximity of a Venus by Palma Vecchio makes it plain enough that he at least could not have painted it, and though it is usually difficult to make out a negative, Morelli would seem to have proved one in the present instance. He explains the lack of Giorgione's internal light by supposing the figure of Venus to have been repainted.

There can never be an authority in art criticism, such as there are authorities in law, or medicine, or in any other science, for among the best judges there will always be a variety of opinions. We should read Morelli's work

therefore with the same suspicion, and also the same attention, with which a lawyer listens to the statement of his client.

RUBENS' "FEAST OF HEROD"

PETER PAUL RUBENS was born in 1577 and died in 1640.

Dr. Waagen says of him in his *Handbook of Dutch and Flemish Art* that he was not only a great painter, but a great man. He was a great painter because he was a great man. Conversely, a really great man is always an artist in his own line: witness Darwin and Webster.

The grandest characters in history are revolutionary characters: Cæsar, Michel Angelo, Luther, Shakespeare, Napoleon, Goethe.

Rubens broke through the narrow restraints of Netherland art, as Michel Angelo freed himself from the yoke of Italian painting in the fifteenth century. In fidelity to nature the art of the Netherlands was only equalled by the greatest artists of Italy, Spain, and Germany; but this skill was expended on comparatively trivial subjects. There are pictures by Dutch painters of the sixteenth century which have a marvellous technical excellence, but they convey no lesson to mankind, afford no inspiration to the wistful mind. With such solid foundation Rubens went to Italy and surveyed the mighty works of Leonardo and Michel Angelo. A savage is strongly impressed by quantitative greatness, but to appreciate qualitative greatness, or what is called grandeur, requires a nature of similar kind. Yet with all his admiration for these heroes of art, Rubens never parted from his own individuality. Standing before the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel he was still Peter Paul

Rubens, and the curious studies he made from them are not more like Michel Angelo than himself. They are the work of Rubens with the design of Michel Angelo showing through them.

He recognized, however, that Venetian art, though not so highly intellectualized as that of Florence, was more true to nature, more human, and more animated. This was in harmony with his own disposition, and he took his own starting-point from Titian and Tintoretto.

He returned to Antwerp and gave Flemish art a breadth of drawing, a greatness of design, and a historic depth such as it has never known before or since. He excelled the realists in their own field, and taught them to look for more elevated subjects. He covered the whole region of painting, from the simplest genre subjects to the grandest religious compositions. His flesh tints were compared to Titian's, his *chiaroscuro* was only surpassed by Correggio's, his drawing view with that of the greatest of the Italians. Sir Joshua Reynolds has said of Rubens that he possessed qualities as a painter which no other artist has equalled. If his coloring has not the peculiar charm of Murillo and Rembrandt, or his drawing the plain ideality of Durer, he has certainly excelled these masters in dramatic power and the great variety of his compositions. No French painter has ever approached him.

Rubens did not go to England until 1628, fifteen years after Shakespeare's death, but he sojourned there at a time when Shakespeare's plays were at the height of their popularity,—before the Puritanic reaction set in,—and it is a foregone conclusion that he must have seen them acted and that they exercised a decided influence on his own art.

The English school of Sir Joshua Reynolds and his



SALOME, RUBENS' 'THE FEAST OF HEROD'

(SECTION FROM THE CENTRE)

successors was founded on the art of Rubens; and from this was derived the American school of Copley, Trumbull, and Allston; until William Morris Hunt introduced the Millet vogue (with its expressionless faces) and the Rembrandt *chiaroscuro*.

Max Rooses, Hermann Grimm, and other Continental critics have compared Rubens to Shakespeare; but this should not be taken too literally. The comparison between a poet and a painter is at best a relative one, and can only apply on certain lines which the sister arts pursue in common. Raphael, Tintoretto, and Rubens have been compared to Shakespeare, and the natural reason is because they are the most dramatic of painters. No one has thought of comparing Michel Angelo to Shakespeare; they are as unlike as the cypress and the oak; and yet he is the only artist that may be said to have rivalled Shakespeare in originality and fame.

Rubens resembles Shakespeare in his blithesomeness, his dramatic power, and the almost exuberant life which he depicts. In his earlier coloring there is a dewy, vernal freshness which might remind one of Heine's lines:

The world is so bright and the heaven so blue,
Through garden and vineyard soft breezes are blowing;
And like little stars in the fresh morning dew
The flowers in the meadow are twinkling and glowing.

Such is the coloring of his *Holy Trinity* and the group of children in the Munich gallery; and what could better describe the spirit in which Shakespeare wrote his earlier and happier plays, like *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*? The redundant health and youthful spirit which carried Shakespeare through so much were also part of Rubens' heritage. These two geniuses have

each a fund of robust strength and good spirits, which they could draw upon as a merchant does upon his bank. Rubens' frequently high coloring and fullness of outline might be compared with Shakespeare's double superlatives and other fanciful conceits. They bound themselves by no classic rules, and they cared as little for public opinion. Shakespeare wrote recklessly, rejoicing in his strength; and Rubens painted with equal freedom and confidence of success.

Out of this continual May-day developed, as a natural growth of the brain, notable figures of charming women and valiant men, no abstract types of character, but thoroughly human personalities, who eat, sleep, love, and reason like the rest of us. We see them not only on one side, but many; and we know that the blood runs warm in their veins. Of all poets Shakespeare is the best portrait painter, and Rubens certainly was one of the best. In his *Fall of the Damned*, at Munich, there is a corpulent figure of a man, spread out like a starfish, whom one would take to be no other than the immortal Falstaff, on the way to his final destination. It is a coarse figure, but Shakespearian. The whole composition is penetrated by an undercurrent of good-humored satire on the vices of humankind,—not unlike that in *Henry IV*.

To do a painting full justice, it ought to be seen under the same conditions in which it was painted. The very light and arrangement of the artist's studio have their own effect. Titian should be seen in Venice and Rubens in Holland or Belgium. There, we understand much better why he is as he is. In fact Dutch art has a more local character, with the exception of Rubens and Van Dyck, than any other national art. With advancing years Rubens would, in any case, have acquired a more serious tone, but his playing ambassador, as he termed it, in England was almost as great an advantage to him

as his early journey to Rome. From that time his coloring became more subdued and his drawing more chaste and temperate. His *St. Jerome and the Lion*, in the Dresden Museum, is an example of this, and perhaps the most perfect painting in that collection.

Shakespeare was not exactly a religious poet. One would not call him irreligious, but in the whole extent of his dramas, there is no passage like that in which Faust replies to Gretchen when she asks him if he believes in God. He certainly was not a religious poet in the sense that Dante, Milton and Racine are religious. It is much the same with Rubens. His *Holy Trinity*, at Munich, is an excellent subject for those critics who consider technical skill everything and motive or design of small account; and although his *Descent from the Cross*, at Antwerp, is considered the grandest of his works, this is more perhaps on account of its dramatic than its religious quality. As a dramatic artist he certainly has never been excelled; but unfortunately his religious pictures are many and his distinctly dramatic works are few. One of the finest of the latter is his *Feast of Herod*, in the collection of Mr. Hermann Linde.

The inquiry is often made, Why do not our artists represent scenes from Shakespeare? and the answer is, Because Shakespeare has developed his scenes with such fullness and reality that he leaves little or nothing practically for the imagination to work on. Freedom of imagination is as necessary to the painter as to the poet, and if he is constrained to follow the invention of another, he becomes after a fashion a translator from one art to another, and his designs serve as illustrations rather than original creations. Freedom of imagination is as essential for the true artists as freedom of action is to the statesman.

Scriptural subjects, on the contrary, possess the rare

advantage of presenting the deepest emotions and strongest forces of human nature in a simple and concentrated form; and thus they afford free scope to the inventive faculty of the artist. The tragical death of John the Baptist is a typical instance of this. We only know that the Herods were hereditary rulers of Judea, and that, for the double crime of taking away his brother's wife and putting an innocent man to death, this, the last of his race, was deposed from his throne by Tiberius Cæsar, and banished, together with Herodias, to Vienna in Gaul. So says Josephus; but in the four Gospels they appear upon the scene like vultures, seize their prey, and vanish again.

Tragedy results from the subordination of a noble nature to a base one, and what can express the essence of tragedy more perfectly than placing the life of a high-minded man as the stake of a frivolous feminine gambler who only knows one motive, the gratification of a Nero-like vanity. This gives it a typical and universal character. It is not, however, a religious tragedy, but essentially moral and human. The religious element serves as a background, for we recollect that it is as the forerunner of Christianity that John the Baptist meets his death to intensify the importance of one of the most contemptible of her sex.

The *Feast of Herod* was painted in 1638, and apparently for the artist's own satisfaction. He had already begun to feel that his life was ebbing, and that it was no longer prudent for him to work on a large scale; but qualitative greatness shows itself in small things as well as large, and breadth of composition does not depend on square yards of canvas. He perfected this work with a deliberation and enjoyment which is apparent at the first glance.

The problem of seating ten or twelve persons at a

table is one that has vexed the most distinguished painters. Leonardo solved it in his *Last Supper* by placing them all on three sides of the table and leaving one long side open for the benefit of the spectator. In his *Wedding Feast at Cana*, Veronese has, as the critics all say, placed the figure of Christ too much in the background. In the present instance, Rubens has solved the difficulty in a very ingenious and quite satisfactory manner. He has placed Herod at one end of the table under a canopy, and then brought the circle of guests well round to the side fronting the spectator, and has filled in the space between with the figure of Salome carrying the head of the Baptist and with a boy prince toying with a monkey. Salome divides the guests from the mother of Herodias, and the boy's head does not rise above the level of the table; so that an effect of completeness is produced without the least confusion. Every figure stands out clearly and well defined.

Salome, the daughter of Herodias, must have been the first figure that he drew; for the burden she carries is the central focus of the piece, to which the action of all the other figures is directly related. And here in the beginning he encountered a difficulty. The dish or charger which she carries must be large enough to contain the fearful burden, and yet the carrier must appear to hold this without excessive exertion. A frightened young girl in dancing costume would not have served Rubens' purposes. He has therefore deviated from the account of St. Matthew in representing the daughter of Herodias as an older and more dignified person than we should naturally suppose her to have been. He has also deviated from Gospel tradition in making Salome present the charger to Herod instead of to her mother. This was absolutely necessary, for any other arrangement would have placed the young woman on the opposite

side of the table, where she would not have been seen to such advantage, and, what was worse, the face of Herod would have been turned away from the spectator. The single fault in the painting is the large arm of Salome. It is more like the arm of a vigorous serving-woman than what one would expect in a case like the present; and if Rubens had been asked for an explanation of this, he might have found it difficult to assign one.

He must have drawn the figure of Herod next in order; for the chief antagonism of the piece lies between these two; and this having been established in a satisfactory manner, he proceeded to conjure up Herodias and the different guests in forms which permitted the greatest diversity of action consistent with the central motive. He placed two guards and a slender waiting-woman behind Herodias; and a shadowy group of half-nude musicians on a high, square plinth at the other end serve as a make-weight or balance wheel to the composition. Nearest to Herodias a Moor, or negro servant, raises a dish of fruit above his head. It is like the composition of a piece of music.

The picture is painted in the Van Eyck manner like Titian's *Tribute Money*; and its coloring goes back to the Van Eyck panels in the Berlin Museum, but is highly sublimated even for Rubens. It resembles in tone his ideal children in the Munich gallery; but the tints are disposed as if by a metacarpal instinct, and so harmoniously that this tragical scene is enveloped in a prismatic radiance, which also is not without its spiritual effect. As Mr. Linde says, the painting has a "bouquet," and it is this incense of the rose and the violet which purifies the subject and elevates it above the plain level of dramatic realism.

Yet this effect has been accomplished with a sparing use of bright colors. The dress of Salome is rose-red,

and so are the sleeves of Herod's tunic, but little is seen of them. Herod wears a black velvet cloak with an ermine cape. Herodias is dressed in white satin; two of the guests are in dark blue, another in dark green, and the rest wear mode-colored stuffs. The walls and floors are a leaden gray, and for sober, restful coloring the canopy and curtain above King Herod could not be excelled. The architecture of the room is in the simplest Roman style, such as might be expected in the time of Tiberius Cæsar; but the costumes are modern.

The principal light falls directly on Herodias, as if to mark her out as the mainspring of the tragedy, while the profiles of Herod and Salome are outlined against it. Such a light as this is can be found in few paintings; the light in Correggio's *Notte*, although different in kind, would be a fair match for it. The figures are all separated from one another without the intervention of dark shadows; and roundness of form has been attained—notably in the case of Herodias—by means of the most delicate shading.

Who now are the performers in this fifth act of a tragedy? Three of them are not to be mistaken. King Herod is a portrait of Rubens himself,—a mighty intellect enshrined in a wasting form. Salome is his first wife, Isabella Brandt in her youthful loveliness and splendor. Herodias is his second wife, Helen Fourment, probably in her wedding dress, and, as we may judge from other portraits, somewhat idealized. An old lady next to Herodias is a copy of the portrait in the Munich gallery, generally supposed to be Rubens' mother. The boy prince is also said to be a likeness of his second son, but his face recalls the groups of idealized children by Rubens at Munich and Berlin. The faces of the guests have also a kind of familiarity for us, like those of old

acquaintances whom we have not met for eight or ten years.

The figure at the opposite end of the table to Herod gives us the key to the whole group. The close-fitting skullcap, the Arab nose, and heavy mustaches can belong to no one but Titian. It is almost a fac-simile of the portrait of Titian by Veronese in his *Wedding Feast at Cana*, which Rubens must have seen and perhaps copied from in the refectory of San Giorgio at Venice.

The person at Titian's left hand is also evidently Tintoretto; not so good a portrait and probably painted from memory, but bearing a decided resemblance to the woodcut of him in Ridolfi's *Maraviglie*. One would expect to find Paolo Caliari on Titian's right hand, but the person seated there has his back turned to us. All we can see of his face is the nose and beard, and these also correspond to Ridolfi's engraving of him. There can be little doubt that this figure is intended for Veronese.

Next to Tintoretto sits Raphael Sanzio leaning with his arm on the table. Few will recognize him, because we are accustomed to think of him as a maidenly, beardless youth. This portrait is evidently painted from the woodcut of Raphael made by Bonasone in 1519, on which it says: "This is Raphael Sanzio of Urbino, in his thirty-seventh year." It is in fact the only likeness of Raphael of which we can be positive; although the features agree as well as could be expected, considering the difference of age, with the supposed portrait of Raphael in the Uffizi and with the later self-portrait in the *School of Athens*. It is apparent from Bonasone that toward the close of his life Raphael wore a beard.

In front of Raphael rises the regal figure of Leonardo da Vinci. It is a profile view and his head is bald, but the powerful eye and the nose with its double curve could not belong to any other. His whole profile, from the

forehead to the chin, corresponds closely with that of the portrait in the Uffizi.

Next to Leonardo, we should expect to find Michel Angelo,—and there he is, with his square forehead, high cheek-bones, and deep-set eyes.

This likeness was also evidently taken from a woodcut by Bonasone, made in Michel Angelo's seventy-second year, and we are pleased to discover from it that the flattened nose of Michel Angelo, which appears on modern cameos, does not properly belong to him. 'That his nose was injured by Torrigiano's fist is indubitable, but not to the extent that is commonly supposed.* Bonasone's engraving is a profile view, but the hair and beard correspond; and so do the height of the forehead, the length of the nose, and the resolute mouth.

The figures of Herod, Herodias, and Salome are painted with the greatest delicacy and precision, but these artist likenesses have been treated more in the manner of Tintoretto, or Titian's bolder style,—their features indicated by swift, decisive strokes of the brush; and this gives to the scene a more animated appearance. Nevertheless they have all passed through the alembic of Rubens' Flemish genius; and it is quite possible that he did not intend to have them recognized too easily. That might have detracted from the harmony of the composition.

The two guardsmen on duty are Spanish soldiers, as may be inferred from their twistified mustachios. Rubens saw enough and to spare of this gentry in his youth.

Now we return to the dramatic opposition between Herod and the daughter of Herodias. Max Rooses thinks

* It is only fair to state that the present owner of this painting disagrees with my opinion in regard to this figure. He believes it to have been intended for Vasari, who, with a glass of wine in his hand, is introducing the other artists to Rubens.

that Salome cannot be conscious of the part she is performing; but this would hardly be possible, either by Gospel tradition or the conditions of the case. Moreover, she evidently appears conscious of it by her dilated eye, half-opened mouth, and the slight blush upon her cheek. She is supported in this trying situation by her maidenly reserve, one of the strongest forces in human nature. Moreover, she is before a king, and must preserve her self-possession whatever may befall.

Her figure resembles the Venus of Praxiteles, but her arms are more muscular. Rubens never reproduced the form of Isabella Brandt more nobly and tenderly than in this last reminiscence. Her face is beautiful, but the poise of her head, the graceful lines of her neck, the dignified sweep of her figure, are equally admirable. The slight trailing of her dress indicates the movement which has only just been arrested.

The head which she carries also bears a resemblance to Rubens. This may have been accidental,—like the English sculptor who modeled the head of Satan in his own likeness; or it may have been to prefigure the death of the artist himself; or it may have been intended for a miracle,—that is, Herod beholds his own face instead of that of the Baptist. The last supposition is by no means impossible, but it would indicate an exceptional boldness of design.

St. Matthew says that Herod disliked to have John the Baptist put to death, but did it in order to keep his promise. Rubens has taken note of this piece of human nature and made the most of it. He does not represent Herod as an inhuman monster. The man is cruel because he is weak and cowardly. He appears as the type of a terror-stricken, conscience-smitten person; and how vividly this is delineated only those who have seen the painting can know. He starts back from the uncovered head

of the Baptist, as if he saw a poisonous serpent, or his own death-warrant. The movement of his legs, which has disarranged the table cloth, is significant of the wrench that is taking place within him. Even the folds of the curtain behind him would seem to be affected by it. Yet, the motion is not overdone, and there is a reserve in the drawing such as belongs to a master-hand.

The back of Herod's chair is curiously wrought into the form of an old Cremona violin. Is this to signify that he was a man to be played upon? It would seem likely.

"Salome blushes and Herodias blanches." One can imagine a three-fold motive in the partner of Herod's crime. She points with her fork at the head of her enemy; at the same time she feels an internal shrinking which takes the blood from her face, and there is more of surprise than exultation in the expression of her eyes. Nothing could be more characteristic of her vulgar nature than the unconscious movement of her hand. As Salome is sustained by her modesty, so is Herodias by her vanity. She represents the heartless woman of fashion raised by the rank of princess to the fortieth power. What is the execution of a "vulgar fanatic" to her?

The technique of this figure is the most remarkable part of the painting. To portray a beautiful young woman is the highest feat of art for either painter or sculptor, and only the greatest artists have succeeded in it. Even Rembrandt and Velasquez would not seem to have been equal to it; but here is a beautiful woman painted under the full glare of a strong light, without a shadow that the artist could take advantage of, yet her features are clear and distinct, her expression well defined, and the silvery gloss of her dress is given to perfection. Herodias has not a high order of beauty, but is

certainly very good looking. It is doubtful if this effect could be produced in a life-size portrait.

The two guardsmen behind Herodias are treated in a slight, sketchy manner, in order to give the effect of distance, though only a few yards from her. They are grinning with heartless vulgarity at the confusion of the King and the embarrassed position of Salome. Close by them is the slender figure of a serving-woman, who inclines her head to one side in the attitude and expression of true feminine pity.

The old lady who sits next to Herodias may be intended for Herod's mother, or her own. Otherwise it would be difficult to account for her presence. Her head also is inclined to one side, but she has lived too long at court to feel much commiseration. She perhaps regrets that the pleasant course of events has been interrupted by this awkward circumstance.

The Moor with the dish of fruit and the boy playing with the monkey are a reminiscence from the festal paintings of Veronese. The former is one of the poetic creations of the seventeenth century. Shakespeare calls Othello a Moor, and describes him as a negro; and this figure would seem to have been imagined by Rubens in a similar manner. He has the color of a negro, but his features are too refined and his expression too intelligent for a real negro. His face and arms are painted with exactly the same color as the curtain above King Herod, but being more in the background, the effect on the eye is different. The action of the boy with the monkey has a childlike ambiguity; and their position may be accounted for by the sudden entrance of Salome.

The resemblance of the guests to the great Italian painters cannot have been accidental.* They are not

* Mr. Hermann Linde appears to have been the first to make this important discovery.

portraits in the strict sense of the word, and yet in a certain way they are more interesting than common portraits; for Rubens has given to each of them an expression and action significant of their several characters. We recognize the majestic manliness of Leonardo, the tender spirituality of Raphael, the contemplative awe of Tintoretto, the judicial energy of Titian, and the grand activity of Veronese. The latter has seized the table with both hands and stretches forth his head like a hound that scents blood. Tintoretto looks at Titian and points to the head of the Baptist. Leonardo's eye flashes with the prophetic fire of retribution,—and great pains have been taken to represent this. Raphael leans forward, and a mark over his shoulder shows where the drapery was originally painted, which was afterwards changed to his upper arm. This may have been on account of the background, but it also gives Raphael a more decided appearance of self-forgetfulness.

What could be more characteristic of Raphael than the manner in which he is here represented? He does not rise from his chair, like the more impulsive natures about him, but leans earnestly forward with the composure and moderation for which he was always distinguished. Bonasone was a dry and literal artist, but Rubens has filled in his outlines with an expression of profound sympathy which it requires close observation to realize.

The expressions of the eyes in this masterpiece are a study by themselves. The attitudes of Titian and Leonardo are very similar, but a line of light runs across the eye of the former, while in the latter the light half surrounds the pupil,—which I interpret to mean that one is external, and the other internal, observation. Rubens has struck the fundamental chord of each of these

geniuses; so that we know them better for his presentation of them here.

Michel Angelo has the strongest face in the group, and the only one which indicates neither surprise nor agitation. In this Rubens shows a knowledge of human nature which few would have expected of him. There are anecdotes of Napoleon's youth which prove that he was originally of a kind and amiable disposition, and if it were not so he would not have been so much beloved. Yet Napoleon could look at men dying on the battlefield without any outward sign of emotion. A pebble will cause a splash in a puddle, but dropped into the sea it disappears with scarcely a ripple. Rubens has attributed this same "heaven and hell temperament" to Michel Angelo, who sees the spectacle before him, but it sinks into him too deeply to find outward expression. Rubens also recognizes the near kinship of nature between Michel Angelo and Tintoretto, who, of all the other guests, indicates the strongest self-control.

Tintoretto and Veronese often introduced themselves and their brother artists into their compositions, but here it may have an exceptional significance. It is not only the feast of Herod, but the feast of Rubens, and he has invited his great Italian compeers to the entertainment. There is good reason for supposing that this has an allegorical meaning.

In the *Tempest*, which would seem to have been the last, and is the most perfect and poetic of Shakespeare's plays, there are a number of passages which may be taken to refer to the author himself. He will bury his books and break his magic wand,—that is, he intends to retire from public life. Both Lowell and Brandes have taken note that Prospero was Shakespeare himself. Was not his whole life passed on the enchanted island of poetic fancies? Was he not isolated from mankind, even

in the heart of London, by the wide gulf of his genius? He lived one life with his fellow-classmen, and another amid the creations of his own lofty spirit. His real companions were not Jonson and Fletcher and Kemp, but Hamlet and Portia and Desdemona.

How could it have been otherwise with Rubens? He was the one great man that Belgium has produced. In his youth he beheld the most ferocious of religious wars at the very gates of Antwerp. He grew up like a lofty tree over the graves of martyrs. The feast of Herod was always before his eyes; and his only escape from it lay in his devotion to his art. It was a mean-spirited age he lived in, both in Belgium and England; and Rubens was in it, but not of it. His real companions were the old Italian masters, whom he had honored in his youth, who had taught him the way to greatness, and with whom he could now consider himself on an equality.

The question may be raised, Why should Rubens make use of himself and his nearest relatives as models for the Herod family? How did Shakespeare understand Iago, except by the Iago in Shakespeare? Rubens may have noticed traits in himself, his mother, and Helen Fourment, which, if developed to the full, might have brought them to such a pass. Otherwise than this it would prove that there is no essential connection between the model which the artist uses and the personality he intends to portray.

The *Feast of Herod* is as unique as the *Madonna della Sedia*. The sensuous admirer of Raphael's outlines or Rembrandt's *chiaroscuro* will not find much satisfaction in it; but the true connoisseur is astonished at its technique, the art writer delights in the grandeur of its composition, and even the dilettante is awed by the moral lesson which it inculcates. As Max Rooses has said, it rises above the average quality of Rubens' works, and

claims a distinction peculiarly its own. Never before or since has such artistic force been concentrated within equal limits. It is painted with a thick, viscous material elaborated into a surface as smooth and hard as enamel; and its coloring has that mellow tone which only age can give, and which Rubens himself could not have imitated. It has a threefold value: as a study in color; for the rare portraits it contains; and as a dramatic scene equal to Shakespeare's best.

MAX ROOSES' OPINION.

On page 12, vol. ii., of Max Rooses' biography of Rubens, we find the following statement concerning the *Feast of Herod*:*

"The movement which impels the guests to gaze at this spectacle is admirable in its unity and in its variety. They form fine groups, and each assumes a different attitude, according to their respective characters. The accessory figures are not less remarkable; the negro especially is depicted with extreme delicacy.

"This work is one of the most remarkable easel pictures which Rubens has produced. The figure of Herod is incontrovertibly the most dramatic, the most Shakespearian of Rubens' conceptions. This King, with glassy eye, pale and unstrung countenance, with contracted eyebrows, with an attitude sombre and dreaming, at the side of this buxom and smiling courtesan, who sports with crime, and confirming the maxim of the moralist, which says that sensuality breeds thirst for blood, forms the most striking contrast that Rubens ever expressed.

"The gradation of light and tones is executed in a masterly style. On the side of Herod the scene is lighted by a calm light of day, but broken by the dais; Salome

*Translated by the present owner.

stands forth in full light and brilliantly in the foreground; the figures of the guests, to the left, recede gradually in the abundant brightness of full day.

"The face of Herod has a darker complexion, as becomes his position and the condition of his spirit. Herodias, Salome, and the guest who is rising are painted as in enamel, scintillating with brilliancy. The guests at the left are treated in a more vaporous manner. Their heads are executed with small strokes of the brush, placed with an admirable sureness of hand.

"The picture is one of those few which, on account of its exceptional qualities, rises above the level of Rubens' usual works, drawing apart from the mass of the master's creation by the character of its execution. These extraordinary qualities place this picture in a rank elevated and distinct. Such a work surprises the general public, routs the critics, and compels the recognition due its rare value as a master-piece."

Prof. Max Rooses is not only one of the most eminent connoisseurs and art critics in Europe, but also highly distinguished as a Shakespearian scholar. Perhaps there is no other person so competent to express an opinion like the above.

THE APHRODITE OF MELOS.

Its Position and Restoration.

IT is ninety years since the statue of Aphrodite was discovered in a walled-up grotto of Melos, and the circumstances of its discovery have come to have a mythological character. Endless and well-nigh fruitless controversies have resulted from the broken plinth, the inscription on it, the hermes or hermæ which were found with it, the broken arm, and the exceptional style of the statue itself. As no satisfactory conclusion has yet been derived from a consideration of the study of these circum-

stances, it does not seem probable that such ever will be. When archæologists begin to charge the lie direct, as M. Reinach does in his letter concerning M. Brest, the vice-consul at Melos, to which M. Brest can no longer reply, it is evident that the subject has been overstudied, and a solution of the problem is not to be found in the direction in which it has hitherto been sought.

Professor Furtwangler anticipated his readers in confessing that his proposed restoration of the statue would not add to, but rather detract from, its merit as a work of art; and this is simply to confess that he has not yet discovered the right explanation for it; for to suppose that a sculptor who possessed a genius to model such a statue would deliberately spoil it by a false motive in the disposition of the arms is plainly a contradiction in terms. After reading Furtwangler's elaborate and rather hair-splitting argument, I came to the conclusion that the only solution of this enigma was to be reached through a comparative study of style and drapery; and, acting on this principle, I obtained results which mutually support one another and point to similar conclusions.

In regard to style, the relation of the Aphrodite of Melos to the sculpture of the Parthenon is obvious enough. Even Furtwangler, who places the statue somewhere in the later Hellenistic period, or about 150 B. C., without alleging very definite reasons for doing so, admits that its sculptor must have lived, in spirit at least, in the age of Phidias. Its largeness of limb and feature, full-sized cranium, and general breadth of treatment indicate this, as well as that more subtle mystery of form which defies description; but there are also essential differences. Statues of the fifth century have a generic rather than an individualized character; and of all ideal works of Greek sculpture, the Aphrodite of Melos is the most highly individualized—so much so as to suggest in-



VENUS OF MELOS

fluence of the model on the hand of the master. This is most strongly marked about the mouth and chin, in the length of neck and the breadth of her waist. There is a decided resemblance in her figure to the reliefs of Wingless Victory on the Acropolis, and to the group called the *Moirai* from the Parthenon, but her hair and drapery are so different from these, or any known hair and drapery of that period, as to force the conclusion that no prominent sculptor of the Periclean age could have modelled the Melian statue. The folds, at least of heavy drapery, in the fifth century, have a downward tendency,—in many instances they are perpendicular,—but the lines of the drapery of the Aphrodite of Melos are more nearly horizontal, with a tendency to sharpness in the principal folds. Her drapery has been complained of by certain critics, but I find it very simple and natural,—much more so than the drapery of the Parthenon statues and reliefs. In the Fates and the Iris groups, the drapery, though wonderful, is too artistic to be perfectly natural.* The same might be said also in regard to the position of the drapery about the waist of the Aphrodite. We recollect, however, the right arms of Michel Angelo's *Night*, and conclude that effects are possible in marble, which are not found in actual life, as there are positions of the body which the sculptors can imitate.

Neither do we find similar drapery in the works of Scopas and Praxiteles; nor on other important statues of the fourth century, with the single exception of the Sophocles in the Lateran.

On statues of the third century B. C. there is little drapery for man or woman; but the drapery of the *Victory of Samothrace* has a flamboyant tendency which is

* Generally speaking, the drapery of the fifth century would seem to have been evolved upon a particular plan or scheme, differing in different cases.

quite contrary to the perfect composure of the Aphrodite of Melos.* We naturally conclude, therefore, that the position of the Aphrodite of Melos in Greek sculpture is between the artistic drapery of the fifth century and the extravagant drapery of the third; that is, about the middle of the fourth century. The finest, as well as the most natural, of all drapery is on the Hermes of Praxiteles.

Studied from a different point of view, we come to a similar conclusion. Statues of goddesses in the fifth century were all draped from shoulder to ankle. The Venus Genetrix and the Irene of Kephisodotos first show a tendency to change in this respect. Then comes the Venus d'Arles with her *peplos* securely fastened about the waist; then the Townley Venus, who is more loosely attired; then the Aphrodite of Cuidos, whose *peplos* is laid aside upon a water-jar; and finally the Venus dei Medici, whose *peplos* has wholly disappeared. It can hardly be doubted that these statues were produced in this order, and it indicates a gradual change, in public taste, from the closely-robed period of Pericles to the ultra freedom of the age of Alexander. According to this scheme, the Aphrodite of Melos finds her place, as above, about the middle of the fourth century, contemporary with the Townley Venus, or allowing for the conservatism of island life, perhaps a little later.

Reinach associates the colossal Neptune at Athens with the Melian statue, and the identity of their authorship is by no means improbable; but it holds a much closer relation to the Sophocles of the Lateran. When I consider the noble aspect of both these statues, the close resemblance of their drapery, their breadth of modelling, the slight vibration in their attitudes, and even

*This is even more conspicuous in the reliefs from Pergamon in Berlin.

the similarity in the positions of their feet, I cannot avoid the conclusion that they were both made by the same sculptor. Herman Grimm, in an **essay on the Venus of Melos**, speaks of a slight movement or swing to her lips, and this strikes me as the keynote to her modelling, and to that of the Sophocles as well. Now Beunsdorf, Konger and the other critics are satisfied that the Sophocles of the Lateran is a copy from the statue of Sophocles which was set up in the new theatre built at Athens during the third quarter of the fourth century.*

The hair of the Aphrodite of Melos is also an indication that the statue belongs properly to the school of Phidias. It is carved in parallel wavy lines like much of the hair on the frieze of the Parthenon (as that of the maiden on relief No. 21, and even that of the youth; and of the manes of the horses), but treated with far greater skill and delicacy of feeling. The loose knot at the back of her head, however, has an artistic negligence unusual in the fifth century, which illustrates Da Vinci's principle, that the hair ought not to be carefully arranged, in order to prevent a studied or mechanical effect. I believe this union of artistic ingenuity with purity of feeling, this artistic naturalism, is peculiar to the fourth century.

There is in the British Museum a silver *dedrachma* of Mallus in Crete, which bears on it a group of Aphrodite and Hermes, and the figure of the former corresponds remarkably to the Aphrodite of Melos.† There is the same long head with a knot of hair behind, the drapery fastened at the waist, the weight resting on the right foot with the left foot advanced, and the only important difference is that Hermes is placed on her right hand, in-

* *Antike Bildwerke der Lateranischen Museum V.*—Beunsdorf und Schöne, No. 237.

† Gardner's *Greek Coins*, Pl. X, No. 31.

stead of on her left; but this is not surprising when we consider that the position on the die is reversed again on the coin. It was one of the earlier suppositions in regard to the Melian statue, that she formed a group with either Ares or Hermes. This would explain the peculiar turn of her body, as well as the expression of her face, and the coin from Mallus makes it morally certain that such a group existed at the middle of the fourth century; for, as Prof. Gardner states, with the conquest of Crete by Alexander's successors, the right of Cretan cities to an independent coinage came to an end.

It is well known that the school of Phidias continued to flourish in the Ionian islands long after it had been superseded at Athens by Scopas and Praxiteles. Thrasymedes was its chief luminary, and who would have been so likely to have modelled a noted group for the people of Melos! Yet we have no certain light in this direction. The relief of his Asclepias at Epidaurus is too poor for a copy to help us; though there is a head of Zeus, or Asclepias, found at Melos, and now in the British Museum, which may well have been from his hand, and recalls in its noble simplicity the treatment of the Aphrodite of Melos.

Her head bears a decided resemblance to the head of Niobe in the Florentine group, allowing for the difference of expression. This makes it possible that the Niobe group was modeled by a son or pupil of our unknown genius,—which also agrees with the time assigned to it, from 340 to 330 B. C.

An American artist writing for the "Century" for October, 1881, made out a well-sustained argument (as arguments go) to prove that the *Venus of Melos* must have been the original statue of Wingless Victory, which had disappeared at the time of Pansanias' visit to Athens, and had probably been carried over to Melos for security.



DIDRACHMA OF MALLUS
(ENLARGED)

It is certain, however, that Pansanias did see this statue of Wingless Victory in its shrine, for he mentions the fact in his visit to Sparta; in addition to which he states that the statue was an xoanon* of *wood*. All the more important statues of divinities in this century were either of bronze or of gold and ivory.

The Aphrodite of Melos has borne a charmed existence. During the bombardment of Paris, in 1871, the statue was removed from the Louvre and placed in a cellar for better security, but during the Communist riots this building was set on fire and the Aphrodite was only saved from utter ruination by the bursting of a water tank above. The warm water, however, loosened the plaster between the upper and nether portions of the statue, and disclosed a narrow wedge of marble between the two which had not previously been noticed. We may suppose that this was inserted originally because the sculptor formed the attitude of his statue somewhat too erect, and wished to give Aphrodite that slight forward movement which adds so much to the graciousness of her presence. With this wedge taken out, a line drawn through the centre of the statue, as seen in profile, would be perpendicular; but from a front view it would describe a double curve of exquisite grace and proportions.

* Pansanias, Book V, p. 356.

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